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ABSTRACT

A guide for teachers of English as a second language (ESL) to native speakers of Hmong focuses on structural aspects of Hmong as contrasted with English and on ways in which the teacher can make the classroom a more natural environment for language learning by this group. The first chapter gives background information on the Hmong people, customs, and language groups. The second chapter outlines significant aspects of Hmong phonology, morphology, and syntax and contrasts them with English. It also suggests techniques for teachers to use in listening for errors in student speech. The third chapter gives ideas for classroom interactions with the Hmong student, drawing on cultural traits, experiences, and items familiar to them. Throughout, emphasis is placed on comprehensible input and meaningful communication. A 17-item annotated bibliography is included. The appendixes contain: (1) a note on the description of sounds; and (2) a list of commonly occurring words: English-Hmong. (MSE)

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AN ESL TEACHER'S GUIDE FOR THE HMONG STUDENT

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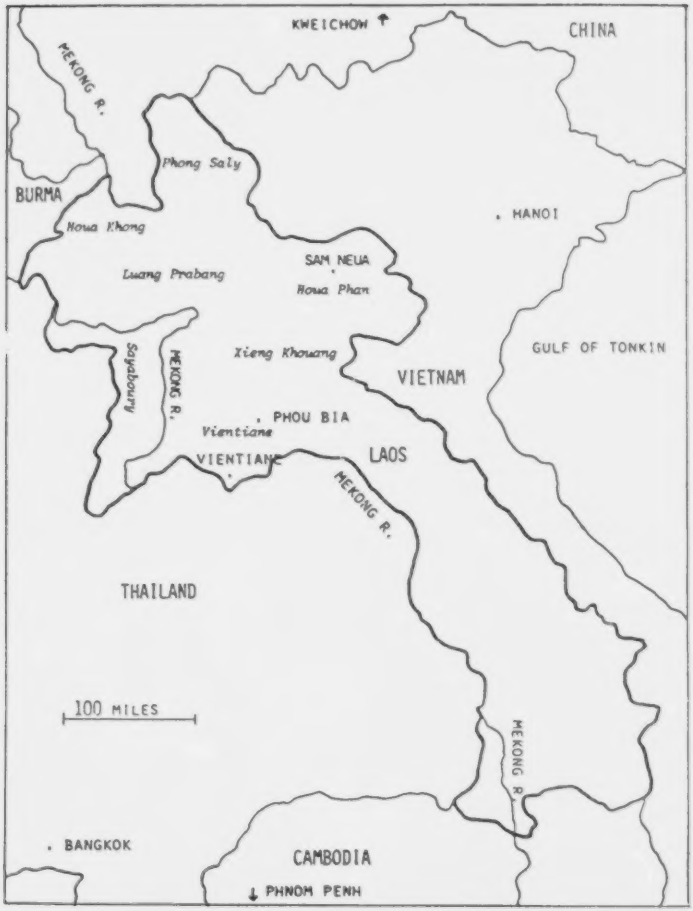

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PREFACE

The purpose of this book is to present a balanced approach to both the form and function of language in teaching English-as-a-Second-Language (ESL) to Hmong speakers. On the one hand, we want to avoid the pitfalls of exclusive classroom attention to language form. On the other, we are cautious about embracing the other extreme, a position such as that held by a noted ESL expert who, after a recent presentation to ESL teachers on the importance of "comprehensible input" in the language acquisition environment, was asked, "Do teachers need to know anything about the structure of English or of the student's native language to teach ESL?" His reply was, "We used to think that." The classroom teacher's personal and professional need for a classroom management system that will facilitate such things as lesson planning, evaluation, and general accountability make reliance on a **completely** functional approach an impractical dream.

We have, therefore, attempted to focus our attention in this book on the linguistic aspects of Hmong and of the English spoken by Hmong learners of English (Chapters One and Two), as well as on practical ways of facilitating a natural environment for language acquisition in the classroom (Chapter Three). Our point of view is that a contextualized learning approach in the classroom combined with a knowledge on the part of the ESL teacher of the structure of Hmong and English (including the ability to observe the structure of Hmong learners' spoken English) will enable the ESL teacher to best help the student advance in the acquisition of English.

In Chapter Four we have included a list of words commonly used by English-speaking children, with their equivalents in Hmong. Knowing Hmong vocabulary is, of course, not necessary to teaching English, but we have found it a great morale builder in and out of the classroom to be able to speak a few words of the students' language. A teacher who makes even a minimal effort to learn a few words of Hmong gives importance to something the child does well (speak his or her own language) and also

allows students to see even the teacher makes mistakes in language learning. This boost to student self-esteem combined with positive in-class attention to the students' own language will do much to insure success in the ESL classroom.

We wish to acknowledge the generous assistance of Graham Thurgood, who carefully read our manuscript and gave us constructive suggestions in many specific areas. We thank Marge Allison for also reading and commenting on a first draft. We are indebted to the School of Arts and Humanities, California State University, Fresno, for a research grant that greatly facilitated the preparation of this work. Most of all, we wish to express our most heartfelt appreciation to the Hmong students of Tehipite Middle School (Fresno Unified School District) for their enthusiastic role in trying out the ESL lessons outlined herein, and to our Hmong "teachers," Need Hawj, Lwm Lis, Xab Lis, and Xis Thoj.

Finally, we extend a special thanks to Ms. Linda Pengilly for affording us her creative organizing, editing and typing talents in the preparation of our manuscript.

FINIAN MCGINN
JERRY MCMENAMIN

FOREWORD

Working in conjunction, McMenamin and McGinn have written ***Acquiring English: An ESL Teacher's Guide for the HMONG Student,*** a volume characterized by its full awareness of the difference between an analysis of what to teach and the discovery of an effective way to teach it. The analysis of **what to teach** in the second chapter "Languages in Contrast: Hmong-English" is written by McMenamin, a professional linguist with an extensive background in bilingualism and second language acquisition. He combines the theoretical and the practical by basing his analysis on the results of a contrastive analysis of the linguistic structures of Hmong and English as well as on his own firsthand observations of Hmong students learning English. The result is a perceptive discussion of what to teach. The actual suggestions for teaching are found in the third chapter "Classroom Ideas for the Hmong ESL Student." This section was written by McGinn, an experienced language teacher who is knowledgeable about linguistics and who has worked extensively with the Hmong. The chapter sketches a number of methodologically sound, classroom-tested suggestions for teaching Hmong students. The result of McMenamin and McGinn's collaboration is both linguistically sound and pedagogically effective.

The apparent simplicity of McGinn's teaching ideas is deceptive. A sophisticated understanding of the nature of second language teaching and learning is implicit in the structure of many of these suggestions. Certain principles derive from the realization that our memories are holistic; that is, we tend to remember not just the form of an utterance **but also the conditions it was learned under.** In fact, among the pieces of information often intimately associated in memory with a new structure is the teacher's body language and tone of voice as well as whether the structure is associated with a "real" interaction or not. Thus, the conditions of the presentation come to constitute part of the "meaning" of a structure. As a consequence, the more realistic the original presentation and subsequent presentations are, the more effective the lesson will be; for instance, the effectiveness of any exercise is increased to the degree that **you can avoid the body**

language and tone of voice of a teacher working on grammar. These same considerations lead McGinn to avoid such non-communicative "teacher" questions as "What color is your shirt?" and "What grade are you in?" where the teacher already knows the answer and the students know the teacher knows; the very sterility of the interaction seriously undermines the usefulness of such questions. Instead, where possible, McGinn uses language purposefully e.g., either by playing "Who am I?" in which the students ask questions **in order to discover the identity of an unknown person** or by asking the students questions to which **he does not know the answer.**

A tolerant awareness that comprehension inevitably precedes production by a significant margin is exploited in the suggested ideas. McGinn, for instance, begins with commands; initially, not only are these made clear through accompanying hand gestures and actions but they also require only non-verbal responses. The response to commands is extended from body movements to include pointing, moving one's head, and then to single word responses with the gradual transition to speaking begun through the use of simple questions. Through controlling the structure of the questions asked the level of complexity of the answers can be controlled. The simplest question to answer is a disjunct e.g., **Is it here or there?** which only requires choosing one of the offered alternatives. Only slightly more demanding are questions such as **Who has the basketball?** which requires only a single word answer for the reply to be communicatively complete. More difficult are questions such as **What is the thief doing?** which require at least a phrase for the reply to be communicatively complete. And, more difficult are questions such as **What happened?** which typically require a sentential answer to be communicatively complete.

An appreciation of the centrality of comprehension to the language learning process also has consequences in two other areas. In acquisition, the most necessary single interest ingredient for language acquisition is **comprehensible input;** most of the other aspects of acquisition will follow quite naturally from this. In evaluation, it is vital to consider the degree of comprehension; any evaluation measures based solely on production are not only measuring only the tip of the iceberg but they are also in danger of mistaking a small part of what is readily visible for the whole thing.

Several other characteristics of McGinn's materials are also only obvious once one looks for them. One is that the language is contextualized. In fact, not just the initial occurrence but also each subsequent occurrence of an utterance is reconnected to the object, event, or situation **each time it is repeated.** Further, it is significant that language use is always connected to an object, event, or situation—never to another word in another language. For instance, to teach **red** through associating it with red objects is far superior to teaching it by associating it with, for example, the Spanish word **rojo.** A second characteristic is that throughout the section the grammar is **illustrated** not **explained;** other than for the specialists, explanations are of quite limited value. A third value of many of McGinn's exercises is that the language is being used for a purpose i.e., the language is being used to find something out or to do something. Thus, in one exercise which from the teacher's viewpoint is designed to help with the discrimination of minimal sound differences, the student is listening carefully in order to spell similar sounding words such as **eat** and **it, bet** and **bit,** and **heat** and **hit.**

Finally, it is crucial to the mental health of the teacher as well as to developing a successful program to have a reasonable set of expectations. It can be extremely valuable to know that with non-English speaking children in a classroom dominated by native English speakers, an initial "pre-speech" or "silent" period often occurs lasting from **three to six months;** in any case, many children will not produce until they are comfortable with comprehension and no evidence exists that forced production has any other effect than retardation of their learning. It is, further, worth knowing that it typically takes children almost two years to approach native speaker fluency in face-to-face communication and an additional four years to approach the equivalent of native speaker proficiency in the language skills required in more academic situations.

More important, however, than any of the above considerations is something that has massive intuitive as well as experimental support: the most important prerequisite for a successful program is the establishment of a supportive, non-threatening, dynamic classroom atmosphere.

GRAHAM THURGOOD

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1. INTRODUCTION TO THE HMONG PEOPLE AND THEIR LANGUAGE

The Hmong originated in Northern China and migrated to Southern China during the late 18th and 19th centuries. At present, the Hmong still make up the largest minority group in Southern China. They live in their traditional center of Kweichow and its neighboring Southern Chinese provinces.

After a long history of emigration under pressure from the Chinese, the Hmong are found today in Burma, northern Thailand, Laos, and Vietnam. Throughout these areas of Indochina, the Hmong are dispersed into isolated farming groups tucked away in remote, high-altitude mountain valleys. The Hmong first migrated to Laos about 150 years ago. Now, as then, they do "swidden farming," working the land for a few years until its productive value diminishes, then moving on to find another farming area. The result of the Hmong's emigration from China and their manner of farming is a minority people on-the-move, scattered throughout the mountainous areas of Southeast Asia, existing as small, ethnically related but separate groups, surrounded by the ethnically different, wet-rice growing majority peoples of the lowlands.

There are three main regional divisions of Hmong:

South China Hmong

The principal groups in this region are: Red, Black, Blue, White, and Flowery Hmong.

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Thailand Hmong

The principal groups in Thailand are Blue-green and White Hmong.

Indochina Hmong

The principal groups of Northern Vietnam are: Red, Black, White, and Flowery Hmong. The principal groups of Laos are: White, Blue, Striped, and Red Hmong.

During their long period of emigration from China, the Hmong divided into many groups (one scholar estimates 50 different ones), and they were often distinguished by the color or pattern of the clothes of the women of the respective groups, e.g., Black, White, Blue, Flowery (embroidered) Hmong.

The Chinese called the Hmong "Miao" or "Meo," the Chinese word for "barbarian" and the Annamese word for "cat," supposedly for their cat-like nimbleness in negotiating high mountain terrain or (some scholars say) because of the similarity of the tonal nature of their language to the meow of a cat. The source of the name "Miao" is, however, somewhat irrelevant since the Hmong consider that name to be demeaning and want to be called "Hmong," which means "free men."

The country of Laos functions as a corridor between China and the Indochinese countries to the south, within which various ethnic groups travel or settle. Unification of Laos has been difficult due to historical, political and especially geographical reasons. The country is about the size of the state of Oregon and has an area of rough upland country bordered on the south and west by the flat lowlands of the Mekong River. Development of the country's economy and systems of communication and transport has been minimal.

Forced to take sides in the conflict over Laos in the early 1970's, many of the Hmong fled their mountain villages, and more recently, the country itself. The Hmong, therefore, have recently faced the anguish of changing from a traditional isolated way of life to being suddenly integrated into the Laotian mainstream, then fleeing Laos and living as refugees, first in Thailand, then in other countries, especially France and the United States. We now find many Hmong refugees living in our communities in the

United States. They, like minority people here and elsewhere, have a language and culture of their own. The Hmong need whatever understanding and help we as educators can give them to learn English and other skills they need to live as a community integrated into our society, as well as to nurture their own language and culture in an environment where even "new Americans" need roots to cling to.

With respect to the Hmong language, Chinese scholars have identified five main dialects of Hmong spoken in China. These dialects are named according to the place in which they are spoken. The Laotian Hmong, however, use variations of Hmong that are distinct from the Chinese dialects. There are four mutually intelligible varieties of Hmong used in Laos, and they are identified by the name of the Hmong group that uses each one. These groups are:

White Hmong (Hmong dawb)

White Hmong women may wear a white skirt and soft red yarn woven into their black headwear. White Hmong is the dialect used by most Laotian Hmong. The Romanized Popular Alphabet (RPA) writing system for Hmong was developed based on White Hmong.

Blue-green Hmong (Hmong ntsuab)

Blue-green Hmong women may wear black skirts with red or blue-green strips of material sewn into them. This is a variety of Hmong that is spoken in the home and in less formal contexts. White Hmong is spoken in more formal contexts. Hmong speakers report that the varieties differ in tones and pronunciation.

Striped Hmong (Hmong txaij)

Striped Hmong women may wear a black, long-sleeve top with blue-green strips of cloth sewn horizontally around the sleeves. The dialect is closely related to Blue-green Hmong and reportedly very different from other dialects.

Red Hmong (Hmong liab hau)

Red Hmong women wear a red tassle around the front of their black headwear. Their dialect is intelligible to other Laotian Hmong speakers and reportedly very similar to other dialects.

Note that our information about these groups and dialects is not based on our own observation or linguistic study, but instead on the reports of a few Hmong speakers. Linguists, though, have reported that the grammatical structure and basic vocabularies (root words) of these various types of Hmong are very similar. The dialects are distinguished by the vocabulary that differs and by phonological features.

The relatedness of these dialects may be of little interest to the ESL teacher, but it is significant that Laotian Hmong who speak different dialects are able to understand one another. This means that problems in learning English which can be attributed to interference from Hmong will be very much the same for all groups.

The Hmong alphabet used informally in Laos, in refugee camps, and in the United States, is the **Romanized Popular Alphabet** (RPA). It efficiently represents the sounds of Hmong, but it is different from the alphabet of English in two important ways. First, a number of sound-letter correspondences are different for Hmong and English. For example, the letter **x** is used in both languages but represents the [ks] sound in English and the [s] sound in Hmong. Secondly the eight tone contours for Hmong words are represented by seven word-final consonant letters. One tone is represented by no letter. This is initially strange for an English speaker reading Hmong in RPA because the English speaker sees the final letter of a monosyllabic word and must get used to the fact that it functions only as a sign for the word's tone, since words in Hmong always end with a vowel sound.

For suggestions for further reading on the Hmong people, Laos, and the Hmong language, see the **Annotated Bibliography**.

BASKET

2. LANGUAGES IN CONTRAST: HMONG–ENGLISH

The notes on the Hmong language that follow are meant to give ESL teachers an idea of the structure of the "source language" from which Hmong speakers are coming as they struggle to learn English, a language very different from their own. This is not, therefore, intended to be a detailed linguistic description of the language.

The linguistic symbols and descriptive conventions used in this paper are the same as those used in many texts in American linguistics. It would be advisable to study an introductory linguistics text for examples of notational conventions not explained here. Above all else, do not let yourself be put off by "strange" linguistic symbols. See them as a necessary evil, read over them as you do an unfamiliar word in a novel, and then look around for an example that will help you interpret one you may not know.

It is useful for the ESL teacher to know the structural details of an English learner's first language for many reasons. Knowing how sounds, words, phrases, and sentences are formed in the student's mother tongue will enable the teacher to make some tentative predictions about what specific English structures might give the student most difficulty. Lesson planning can begin here. This explicit awareness on the part of the teacher of the

structures of both English and the student's native language will enable the teacher to:

Carefully listen to the student's use of English.

Note which grammatical forms present most difficulty.

Informally assess the student's level of linguistic development and progress in English.

Plan contextualized learning activities to systematically reinforce what the student knows and to introduce new structures.

Anticipate and minimize problems when children begin to learn to read in English, by recognizing the potential phonological, lexical, or syntactic sources of interference from the English writing system.

The description of the phonological and grammatical system of Hmong that follows is that of White Hmong spoken in Laos. There are eight tones in White Hmong.[1]

Word Spelled in RPA	Meaning	Final Letter Marking Tone	Approximate Pronunciation	Approximate Tone Contour
dab	trough, spirit	-b	[da^{1}]	high level
daj	yellow	-j	[da^{2}]	high falling
dav	large, wide, eagle	-v	[da^{3}]	mid rising
da	lie down, bathe	- (no letter)	[da^{4}]	mid
tas	finish	-s	[ta^{5}]	long low
dag	lie	-g	[da^{6}]	breathy low
dam	broken, break	-m	[da^{7}]	short low
tawd*	go out, run out	-d	[tɔi^{8}]	glottalized low-mid-low

*infrequent

1. I am grateful for the help of **Hawj Need** and **Lis Xab** in recording the tones. See if you can pronounce their names: [hɔi^{2} neŋ^{1}] (li^{5} sa^{1}].

Listen to the accompanying tape for spoken examples of the tones for these words:

RPA	Pronunciation	Meaning
pob	[pɔ¹]	lump
poj	[pɔ²]	female
pov	[pɔ³]	throw
po	[pɔ⁴]	pancreas
pos	[pɔ⁵]	thorn
pog	[pɔ⁶]	paternal grandmother
pom	[pɔ⁷]	see
pod	[pɔ⁸]	--

A GRAMMATICAL SKETCH OF HMONG:

The sound system — initial sounds:

Sound: [ ]	pʰ	p		tʰ	t	d	tyʰ	ty	kʰ	k	qʰ	q	ʔ
RPA Spelling:	**ph**	**p**		**th**	**t**	**d**	**ch**	**c**	**kh**	**k**	**qh**	**q**	–
Sound: [ ]				tsʰ	ts		čʰ	č					h
RPA Spelling:				**txh**	**tx**		**tsh**	**ts**					**h**
Sound: [ ]		f	v	s	z		sy	š					
RPA Spelling:		**f**	**v**	**x**	**zh**		**xy**	**s**					
Sound: [ ]	m	m̥		n	n̥		ñ	ñ̥y		ŋ			
RPA Spelling:	**m**	**hm**		**n**	**hn**		**ny**	**hny**		–			

| | | |

3. The above facts (in 1 and 2) are important for a couple of reasons. While Hmong speakers have many initial clusters, the only **one** that resembles English is **pl-**. Second, the unaspirated voiceless sounds [p, t, ty, etc.] sound voiced (like [b, d, dy, etc.]) to English speakers. They **are** voiced when following a nasal in an initial cluster. Therefore, while Hmong does not have these voiced stops, Hmong speakers do produce them. When speaking English, though, a Hmong learner may tend to precede the voiced stop with a nasal, e.g., [mb-] instead of just [b-].
4. Very common initial consonant groups are **n + p, t, r, k, q, ts** (and others).

Word final sounds:

Hmong words do not end in any consonant or any consonant cluster. Vowels and dipthongs end words. The only exception to this is final [-n] (after front vowels) and [-ŋ] (after back vowels). Some dialects have no final nasals but just very limited nasalization of final vowels, or no nasalization or [-n/-ŋ] at all.

In some dialects and with some tones, words can end with [ʔ].

Note Summary Of Sounds chart on page 11.

Vowels of Hmong:

Sound:	[i]		[ɨ]		[u]
RPA Spelling:	**i**		**w**		**u**
Sound:	[e]	[ẽ]			[õ]
RPA Spelling:	**e**	**ee**			**oo**
Sound:				[ɔ]	
RPA Spelling:				**o**	
Sound:			[a]		
RPA Spelling:			**a**		

Dipthongs:

Sound: [ ]	ia, ua, ai, au, əi
RPA Spelling:	**ia ua ai au aw**

The nasalized vowels [ẽ] and [õ] are either nasalized or followed by [-ŋ], that is [-õ or -õŋ], [-ẽ or -ẽŋ]. Note that these vowels are spelled with double letters.

[ia] and [ua] are **not** pronounced like [ya] and [wa], but like [i + a] and [u + a] respectively.

Tones:

There are eight tone-contours possible for Hmong words. Also, a word pronounced with one tone in one dialect may have a different tone in another dialect. A word's characteristic tone can also change when that word comes close to another word with another tone.

While Hmong words are not pronounced with any final consonants, every Hmong word has a final **written** consonant. There are only seven of these word-final written consonant symbols. (One tone is marked by not having any symbol.) These consonant letters do not, however, represent consonant sounds. They represent the eight possible tones in Hmong.

Syllable structure:

Hmong has four possible syllable patterns:

V
CV
CCV
CCCV

In the rare cases where a word ends in a consonant, it is [-n, -ŋ, or -?] only.

Word formation:

Languages are sometimes characterized according to their morphological patterning. This classification of languages by how they put morphemes together to form words is useful information for the ESL teacher because,

Language: Hmong

Dialect: White Hmong (Laos)

SUMMARY OF SOUNDS:

| | | |

while English allows for many word prefixes and suffixes, many of the native languages spoken by our students do not combine more than one morpheme in a single word.

A **synthetic language** allows prefixes and suffixes (and sometimes even "infixes") to be attached to other morphemes to form words made up of several meaningful units:

English: de-cert-i-fi-ed

Spanish: con-tent-o-s

An **analytic language** isolates each morpheme into a separate word. For that reason, analytic languages are also called **isolating** languages. Each morpheme is a single word used by itself. In Hmong, for example, every syllable is a separate morpheme, and every morpheme is a separate word:

in tug tsov = "one tiger" (one + classifier + tiger)

coob tug tsov = "many tigers" (many + classifier + tiger)

Note that the idea of "many" is marked by other words, not by a **plural** suffix as in English. Meanings expressed in an analytic language like Englsih by combining morphemes are expressed in isolating languages by combining separate free morphemes (words).

While it is not often possible to classify a language as totally analytic or synthetic, languages can clearly be placed in one general category or the other. For example, the following languages spoken by many of our ESL students are classified as follows:

SYNTHETIC	ANALYTIC
Japanese	Cambodian
Korean	Cantonese
Portuguese	Hmong
Punjabi	Lao
Spanish	Mandarin
Tagalog	Vietnamese

ESL students who speak a native language that is analytic (isolating), like Hmong, may have some initial difficulty learning to recognize the deriva-

tional morphemes needed to understand and use whole classes of English words. They may also find the few inflections of English difficult to learn.

The grammatical categories found in Hmong are: nouns, pronouns, demonstratives, numerals, classifiers, verbs, adjectives, descriptive words, adverbs, prepositions, conjunctions, auxiliaries, and interjections.

As an "isolating" lanugage, each syllable is a word, i.e., each syllable carries either grammatical or lexical meaning. While there are many polysyllabic words, by far most words have just one syllable. The loanwords from Chinese and now from English are the source of the polysyllabic words.

Compound words are formed by adding a **prefix** + **root** (like English **re** + **turn**), or by combining **two root words** (like English **tablecloth**) in the following way:

HMONG	**ENGLISH TRANSLATION**	**ENGLISH WORD**
fuab tais	cloud + bowl	king
paj pob kws	flower + classifier + corn	popcorn
qhov rooj	hole + table	door
kub nyuj	gold + cow	horn
taub hau	pumpkin + boiled	head
mis nyuj	breast + cow	milk
teeb nyem	light + press	flashlight
zaj haus dej	dragon + drink + water	rainbow
kua muag	liquid + eyes	tears

Classifiers, nouns, verbs, and adjectives can all be involved in tone change when coupled with a noun, and also in morphological change (change of word-shape) to indicate meaning differences.

Classifiers categorize nouns something like articles do in English. They have different forms indicating different size (tiny, large), appearance (ordinary, attractive), and definiteness of an object.

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Every noun has its classifier. The classifier works much like a "counter-word" used before non-count nouns in English, e.g., **a lump of** sugar, **a bottle of** water. The classifier **tus,** for example, occurs with nouns that are animate (humans and animals). Other Hmong classifiers denote inanimate objects of definite shape (house), flat things (blanket), books, trees and plants, weapons or utensils (spoon), wind/smoke/steam, rooms, mail, rope/thread/wire, arms/legs. Some classifiers make nouns plural, like **a herd of elephants** in English. When the classifier is not used in Hmong, it indicates the generic use of the noun, like English **houses** in, "Houses are beautiful," or **a scout** in, "A scout is always ready."

Numbers: The construction is always: **number + classifier + noun.**

Possessive: The construction is: **possessor + classifier + noun.**

Xab + phau (classifier) + book (Xa' book)

we + lub (classifier) + house (our house)

Descriptive words modify verbs and adjectives to indicate characteristics such as speed, sound, situation, color, taste, etc. They function like adverbs, but they always follow the verb or adjective they modify.

turn over + desc. word for sudden turning (to turn over suddenly)

red + desc. word for degree of red (very red)

Verbs have no suffixes to indicate time, agreement, or anything else. There can be a word (an auxiliary) preceding the verb indicating tense, but it is left out if the tense of the verb is clear from the context. Examples of auxiliaries used are:

you + **will** + **must** + past + go (You should have gone)

Adjectives and demonstratives follow nouns:

cloth + blue (blue cloth)

two + book + this (these two books)

The structural pattern for numerals is the same as that found in Chinese:

Separate numbers for 1–10

"2 10" = 20

"2 10 2" = 22

"7 10 6" = 76

Of interest with respect to word formation (but of no particular use to the teacher of ESL to Hmong from Laos) is the existence of a secret female language that is reported in a dialect of Hmong spoken in China. One author claims that this language is used so exclusively by the local women that even their husbands cannot understand it. (Another author remarks that some men do understand it.)

The vocabulary and grammar of the secret language are the same as that of Hmong. A simple rule of phonetic change in words is used to form words in the secret language. A one syllable word is changed to two syllables by adding [y] after the initial sound and [s] before the final vowel:

la ("paddy field") becomes **ly sa**

ko ("I, me") becomes **ky so**

There is yet another method these Hmong women use for changing the word if this proves comprehensible to the men. They add to the already changed word the nonsense syllable [ča] between the two syllables that resulted from the first change, resulting in a three syllable word:

la becomes **ly sa** becomes **ly ča sa**

ko becomes **ky so** becomes **ky ča so**

Some Representative Sentence Structures:

There are imperative, declarative, interrogative, and exclamatory sentences in Hmong.

Without inflectional morphology, the grammar is dependent mostly on word order and function words.

16

The most common word-order of Hmong is subject-verb-object (SVO), like English:

tiger + bite (Tigers bite)

Yes-no questions are formed by putting the question marker **puas** before the verb:

you + **puas** + like + I (Do you like me?)

Wh- questions are formed by placing the Hmong equivalent of English **who, which, where,** or **whatever** in the complement position:

you + go + place + where (Where are you going?)

Negatives are formed by adding the negative word **tsis** before the verb or auxiliary:

I + **tsis** + go + tomorrow (I won't go tomorrow.)

Compound sentences are formed much like they are in English with conjunctions like **and, then, so, but**:

I + go + **classifier** + boat + then + I + return + home

(I went to the boat, then I came home.)

Complex sentences (sentences with embedded sentences) are formed something like those of English:

I + **past** + see + classifier + noun + that + **past** + send + one + **classifier** + letter + to + you

(I saw the man that sent a letter to you.)

She + say + that + **imperative** + you + return + home

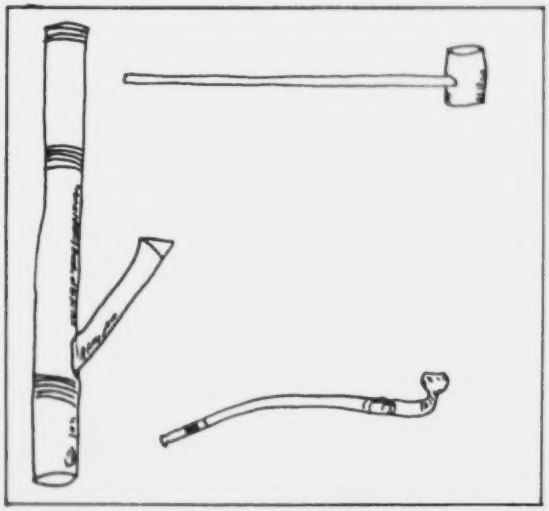
(She told you to come home.)

I + **progressive** + learn + sew + clothes (I am learning to sew.)

Conditional sentences in Hmong are different from those of English:

If + sky + come + rain + we + **future** + get wet

(If it rains, we'll get wet.)



PIPES FOR SMOKING

If + sky + **past** + come + rain + we + **future** + **past** + get wet
(If it had rained, we would have gotten wet.)

A BRIEF CONTRASTIVE DESCRIPTION OF HMONG-ENGLISH

Based on the above brief review of the structure of Hmong, we are able to get an idea of the structures in contrast to English and, therefore, make some tentative predictions about what English structures the Hmong may have difficulty learning.

The following is a list of possible problem areas, i.e., expected points of difficulty for the Hmong speaker learning English:

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Sound system of English:

Initial sounds [θ ð r w]
All initial consonant clusters except [pl-]
All final consonants and clusters (except [-n] and [-ŋ])
Vowels [I æ ə U oy] as in **pit, pat, putt, put, boy**
Syllables that end in a consonant

All inflectional suffixes

Function words like articles, prepositions, verb particles, and conjunctions

Adjective position

Sentences in English that involve insertion or movement of an auxiliary verb: negation, questions, and emphatic sentences

Complex sentences

Conditional sentences

OBSERVATIONS ON HMONG LEARNERS' ENGLISH PRONUNCIATION

In what follows, I have considered approximately 100 ungrammatical sentences taken from the recorded natural conversation of four Hmong boys learning English. Their ages are: 11, 14, 17, and 20. I think you will agree, after considering these examples, that many of our "tentative predictions" about points of expected learning difficulty are accurate.

[ð] is pronounced [d], as in these examples:

that's	[dæs]
this	[dIs]
my bro**th**er	[may br.ˈdər]
the	[də]

Sometimes the [ð] is just lost:

my bro**th**er	[may br.ˈər]
my mo**th**er	[may m.ˈər]

[θ] is pronounced [t]

with my people	[wIt]

[v] is often not pronounced:

have	[hæ] or [hæ?]
every	[ɛwi]
stove	[sto]

Some initial and medial consonant clusters are simplified (one of the sounds is lost) or not pronounced at all:

the **clan**	[kæn]
my **language**	[lǽŋgə]]
scrambled eggs	[stǽmbəl]

Word-final alveolar consonants [-s -z -t -d -n -l] are *very* often not pronounced at all:

eggs	[ɛg]
a **flute**	[flu]
eight o'clock	[ey] or [ey?]
I buy **food**	[fu]
still	[stI]

[r] in various positions is not pronounced or is made easier to pronounce:

copper	[kápə]
girl	[g.'ə]
rice	[prays]

Syllabic [l̩ n̩ r̩] (usually prounounced instead of [əl ən ər]) are difficult for the Hmong learner:

my **people**	[pi'pol]
seven	[séɛn]

Word-final [-θ -t -d -k], and other final consonants, especially stops, are often pronounced as [-?]:

United **States**	[ste?]
eighth grade	[e? gre?]
music	[mizI?]

Word-final clusters of especially alveolar consonants are simplified or not pronounced:

flutes	[flut]
this word means "old"	[min]
United States	[ste?]
old	[o]
fifth	[fIf]
months	[m_ n]
first	[f_ rs]
six	[sIs] and [sIts]
example	[ɛzémpol] (syllable final)

Final nasal consonants [-m -n] and final clusters with a nasal and an alveolar consonant [-mz -nz -ns -nd] are not pronounced, and the vowel preceding these nasals is nasalized:

home	[hõ]
clan	[kẽ] and [klẽ]
sometimes	[s_mtãỹ]
means	[mĩ]
kind	[kãỹ]
Portland	[pórtlə̃]
months	[m̃]

English vowels do not present much problem for the Hmong learner. The [æ] is often pronounced like the close sound [ɛ], and I heard one occurrence of the [yu] combination pronounced like the unrounded **u** [ɨ] of Hmong:

the family	[fémlɨ]
I happy	[hépi]
music	[mɨzI?]

My immediate **teaching objectives** in pronunciation for these Hmong students would be sound discrimination and production work in these areas:

Initial consonant clusters

All final consonant clusters, especially those with alveolar and nasal consonants

All final consonants, especially alveolars and nasals

Special work on [ð θ ks v r æ] in all positions possible

Some work on the intonation of statements and questions in English. (One speaker out of the four recorded had considerable trouble with intonation of sentences.)

OBSERVATIONS ON THE HMONG LEARNERS' ENGLISH SYNTAX:

Inflectional suffixes, especially the plurals of nouns and the third person singular of the present tense of regular verbs, are often lost:

Her class are Trig, Social Living, and French.
There is only a few word that we change tones.
The instrument with six pipe of bamboo . . .
Your friends and relative would invite you.
Sick people sometime lost their spirits.
They still used natural medicine, which Hmong expert found . . .
We had to move to the mountain.
Hmong live on the mountain by themself.
The family name just show where you live and who are your ancestor.
Nobody teach them.
That mean "she."
The book show three type of alphabet.
My brother wife make (dinner). *I don't have to make.*

Besides verbs (like those above) that lose their present and past tense inflections, speakers often use irregular verbs without marking the appropriate tense or agreement:

Their living are very inconvenient there.
She also have a goal for her future.
(Did you go to school in Laos?) Uh, uh, I go to school in Laos.
I (usually) *go home and I watching the cartoon.*

*They **doesn't** tell me.*
*Every family should **had** his own rice field.*

Indefinite articles are often left out or substituted by **one**. The definite article is used before place names:

When they had __ party, they let other villages know.
*I go to **the** Portland, Oregon.*
He's __ good student.
*He give me **one** bus token.*
*I have **one** boy* (friend).
To the right side they put __ spoon and knife.

Which English nouns are count and non-count, of course, must be learned:

*She does her **homeworks** in the library.*
*They lack **foods** such as rice, meat, and **vegetable**.*
*They don't have anywhere to earn money to buy **foods**.*
*I have scrambled eggs and two **meats**.*
*They get **a chocolate milk**, too.*

Adjectives and modifiers may not have the appropriate form and may occur **after** the modified word:

*Communication between them was very difficult and **unconvenience**.*
*I love the school **this**.*
*I happy **so much**.*

Use of the appropriate preposition in English is often a source of difficulty for all ESL students:

*Hmong lived **on** the mountain by themself.*
*They still use natural medicine, which Hmong expert found them **from** the jungle.*
*I live **in** there [Portland] six months.*
I go take a shower __ seven o'clock.
***In** the left side they put a fork and napkin.*
*I have one. I give one **for** you.*

English word-choice, idioms, and expressions, of course, present difficulty for the Hmong ESL learner:

*The spirits were with you when you **had a perfect physic.*** (were in good health.)
*They went from village to **other** village.*
*There is nowhere they can plant and **make** crop.*
*I have **turn the gas come.*** (turn the gas in the stove on.)
*They write **like what they say.***

Sentence coordination sometimes presents a problem for the Hmong learner, especially when to use **and** and what to omit from the second conjoined sentence:

He do math.__ He got A.
*This is the reason why after marry **and** the girl still use her own name.*
*There is only a few word that we change tones **and** the same thing.*
*I have one sister **and** two brothers, **and** younger me.*
*He gave me one bus token, **so** best friend.*

The linking verb **to be** is often omitted (as in three of the sentences above), especially before adjectives:

All of them __ short.
I __ married.
I __ happy so much.

The complexity of the English conditional sentences is apparent in the Hmong learners:

Even __ they bad, we must respect them.
If I know you come here, I bring a book.

Virtually all types of sentences embedded in verb-phrase complements present considerable problems for the Hmong learner:

*The family name just show where you live **and** who **are** your ancestors.*
*She doesn't waste her time **to** do any ordinary thing.*
*For example, the bamboo flute with six flutes, **and** we use play as music.*
*This is the reason why **after** marry and the girl still use her own name.*
*They forget **what they come from and what native they are.***
*Ban Vinai [a refugee camp] is very difficult **for** people to live.*

*They still use natural medicine **which Hmong expert found them from the jungle.***
*This **I told finish**.* (- just finished telling.)
*I don't have a bus token **take a bus**.*
*After lunch he ask the teacher **he get a ball**.*

My immediate **teaching objectives** in English grammar for these Hmong students would involve specific structures in all of the areas outlined above:

All inflections on verbs and nouns, but especially present tense, past tense, and plural

Subject-verb agreement

Use of definite and indefinite articles

Count vs. non-count nouns

Adjective position

Word choice and idioms

Sentence coordination

Using the verb **to be** before adjectives

Conditional sentences

Complex verb-phrase complements.

PRACTICE IN LISTENING AND IN ERROR IDENTIFICATION

Listening to students speak can provide the basis for your ESL curriculum. Try it! Listen on the tape provided to samples of the spoken English of one of the Hmong learners whose language was just analyzed in the previous section. Attempt to isolate grammatical errors and identify classroom teaching objectives based on what you observe. Attempt to do this yourself, following the "key" that follows:

Your goal is to learn to listen to your own Hmong students' English (even without a tape recorder) and base your day-to-day teaching of ESL directly on just those language forms which they seem to be having most trouble

with at the time or those which are most crucial to their understanding and being understood.

A word of caution: By asking you to focus on the student's errors, we are assuming that you will then focus your ESL lessons on pronunciation and structural patterns the student most needs and/or those the student seems most ready to learn. This, however, is **the focus of the teacher,** not the student. Focusing the attention of the students on these objectives by repeated practice of language forms in class will **not** contribute much to their English language acquisition. The **student's focus** should be on a meaningful task of interpersonal communication that involves using some of the language forms which make up the teacher's "hidden agenda."

Now, listen to the tape and follow along on the following transcript of the conversation.

This type of language analysis is painstaking work! We are, of course, not suggesting that you do this type of taped and transcribed analysis for each student. We are hoping, however, that you see that observation of students, even just causal listening, can help determine your day to day ESL curriculum. After you have attempted this exercise once, listen to the tape again two or three times. This will likely allow you to notice inaccurate pronunciations and sentence constructions you did not hear before.

LISTENING PRACTICE: KEY

Section 1

1. [Yea, what kinds of things do you do with, ah, Luan?]
2. *And, he's come with me, and, reading the book, and, study, and,*
3. *homework. He don't understand the, ah, he told me I tell*
4. *him do homework for him. And, then finish homework, and we*
5. *had a TV, then he ask me, uh, go watch, as TV, and . . .*
6. [Uh, uh. Did you say yes?] *Yea, uh, and, but, because no*
7. *more work do, and go watch TV's, and, ah, watch TV's to nine*
8. *o'clock, and that's uh, no, no, no more the show's good, and is*

go sleep, yea. [Uh, uh. So, do you go to sleep at nine o'clock too?] *Yea, sometimes I go to ss . . . nine o'clock. n' sometimes I had a lot of homework. Mc McGinn, ah Mr. Jimenez gave homework to me, ah, I have to sleep ten o'clock, or ten, or fifteen, or ten or thirty, to sleep.*

Section 2

[What, ah, what kinds of things do your sisters do that really bug you?] *Uhm* . . . [You know what I mean by, "bug you?" Really make you upset, you know?] *Yea* . . . [You go, "grrr . . ."] (Laughter) *Because he, ah, I had something, and he, he had one, he, he said, she, she had one, and I doesn't get it first, she, she saw, cries, she say, mmm, my mother, "Mother, can you said brother give me something, too?" And my mother, say me, ask me I give something to my sister. He's so happy, he's go play.* [Oh, really? What was it you had . . .?] *I had, ah, some flowers, or the little fish, or anything.* [. . . But can you remember the last time, the last time you got mad at your sister? . . .] *Uh, uh.* [What happened?] *Because I have one, I have one dollar, and, one dollar, and my sister, she's, uh, like, she's like a me _____. I have one dollar. She doesn't have dollar, and she say, "Give me one dollar," and I say, "No, I don't have,"* (laughter). *She, she still cry, she, so I don't have, I go tell our Pa, 'n, and my Pa, she's go ask my Pa, and my Pa say, "you give one fifty's, one twenty-five cents to your sister," and I say, "So, I have one dollar, nobody change for me. So I go change, and I give twenty-five for her, and her so happy, and her stop, her doesn't cries.* [Yea,

doesn't cry anymore, huh?] *Because she has the twenty-five cents, she's happy.* [She's happy, uh. What did you spend your money on?] *Ah, my, the, my friends, ah, my pa give me, and I buy, I buy some candy, and the kid changed for me.* [Uh, uh; uh, uh.]

[Ah, so is there anything at home that your Pa asks you to do that you don't like?] *Yea.* [Like what?] *My Pa said, "Today you, you go play with your friend?" I say, "No." "Why?" "Because I have lots homework do," and my Pa say, "Ooh, that's good. Uh, uh, you just study your homework and don't go play. You go play, you don't have your homework, teacher beat you.* (Laughter) [The teacher beats you?] *Yea, I don't study.* [Doesn't he think, does he think . . . ?] *Yea, he think . . .* [He thinks the teacher beats you, right?] *Yea, uh I say, "Yea, Pa, you say, you said good, I believe you, I doesn't go play, I stay home and study my homework." My Pa say, "That's good."*

Some examples of "errors" you may have found are:

Subject not expressed:

2. . . . *and, reading the book, and study . . . .*
6. . . . *because no more work do.*
8. . . . *and is go sleep.*
40. . . . *go play with your friend?*

Verb not expressed:

2. . . . *and study, and homework.*

Object not expressed with verb **have**:

28. *I say, "No, I don't have," . . . .*
29. . . . *I don't have.*

Missing or inappropriate **preposition**:

10. *I go s(leep) nine o'clock.*
12. *I have to sleep ten o'clock.*
19. *. . . she say, mmm, my mother, ...*
20. *My mother say me . . . .*
21. *I give something my sister.*
33. *I give twenty-five for her, ...*
43. *I have lots homework . . . .*

Missing or inappropriate **article**:

27. *She doesn't have dollar.*
28. *. . . she say, "Give me one dollar," . . . .* ("one" = a)
32. *. . . I have one dollar, ...*
45. *. . . you don't have your homework [in Laos], teacher beat you.*

Pronoun problem:

17. *. . . he, he had one . . . .* ("he" = she)
21. *He's so happy, he's go play.* ("he" = she)
34. *. . . her so happy, and her stop, her doesn't cries.*

Tense use or marking problem.

5. *. . . then he ask me . . . .*
19. *. . . she saw, cries, she say, mmm, my mother . . . .*
19. *"Mother can you said brother give me . . . ."*
29. *. . . she still cry . . . .*
32. *. . . nobody change for me.*
34. *. . . her doesn't cries.*
37. *. . . my Pa give me . . . .*
38. *I buy some candy . . . .*
45. *. . . teacher beat you.*

Lack of **agreement** between subject and auxiliary verb **do**:

3. *He don't understand . . . .*
18. *I doesn't get it first, ...*
49. *I doesn't go play, ...*

Insertion of **is** before main verb:

2. *He's come with me, ...*
8. *. . . and is go sleep . . . .*
21. *. . . he's go play . . . .*

Absence of words like if, to, when used to introduce subordinate clauses:

3. *. . . he told me I tell him do homework for him.*
4. *And, then finish homework . . . .*
5. *. . . then he ask me, uh, go watch, ah, TV . . . .*
6. *. . . because no more work do . . . .*
19. *. . . can you said brother give me something, too?*
43. *I have lots homework do, ...*
45. *You go play, you don't have your homework, teacher beat you [in Laos].*
46. [The teacher beats you?] *Yea, I don't study.*

Direct quotations in place of indirect statements (a few examples):

19. *. . . she say, mmm, my mother, "Mother, can you said brother . . . ."*
28. *. . . she say, "Give me one dollar," . . . .*
28. *. . . and I say, "No, I don't have."*
31. *. . . my Pa say, "You give one fifty's . . . ."*
32. *. . . and I say, "So, I have one dollar . . . ."*
41. *My Pa said, "Today you, you go play . . . ?"*
42. *I say, "No."*

3. CLASSROOM IDEAS FOR THE HMONG ESL STUDENT

INTRODUCTION

Welcome to the adventure. We are the lucky ones. We have the opportunity of witnessing and participating in a very exciting process. We stand by and guide our students as they say farewell to the security and comfort of their mother tongue—take a risk—and plunge themselves into an adventure frought with tension, fear and errors, called the **interlanguage.** The language in between English and the mother tongue is a language in transition—a time of internalizing, of restructuring, of attempting to build one's own English language system. It includes risk-taking strategies, overcorrection, overgeneralization, and simplification of complex structures. It is a difficult time for both student and teacher, but it has to take place. Authors tell us that the interlanguage is developed in response to the students' experienced needs to communicate. If students experience no needs, they will not learn.

The emphasis in an ESL classroom, then, is on **communication.** It is a challenge for us, as ex-foreign language teachers and ex-grammarians, to adjust to the new role of providing communicative experiences. We have been trained to encourage our students to avoid error and to produce only well formed sentences. We have always emphasized and tested the grammatical skills rather than the communicative competence. Thus, we, too, find ourselves in a time of creative change.

The ideas which follow are an attempt to help both student and teacher during this time of transition. I thought it would be useful for you to have a few exercises which have worked for me at the junior high level. The ideas are not new, but they have worked and they lend themselves to further development and creativity. They can be used as a guide for you as you develop your own.

If communication is essential, then it should be given the priority of time in our classroom. In an ordinary 45 minute period, I'll usually spend about 30 minutes on communication, ten minutes on polishing up syntax and new ideas, and five minutes on pronunciation problems.

The exercises which follow can be easily adapted to non-readers. In fact, I don't even worry about reading or writing until the beginning of the second semester. If you teach ESL II or ESL III, then, you can demand that the responses be given orally and in writing.

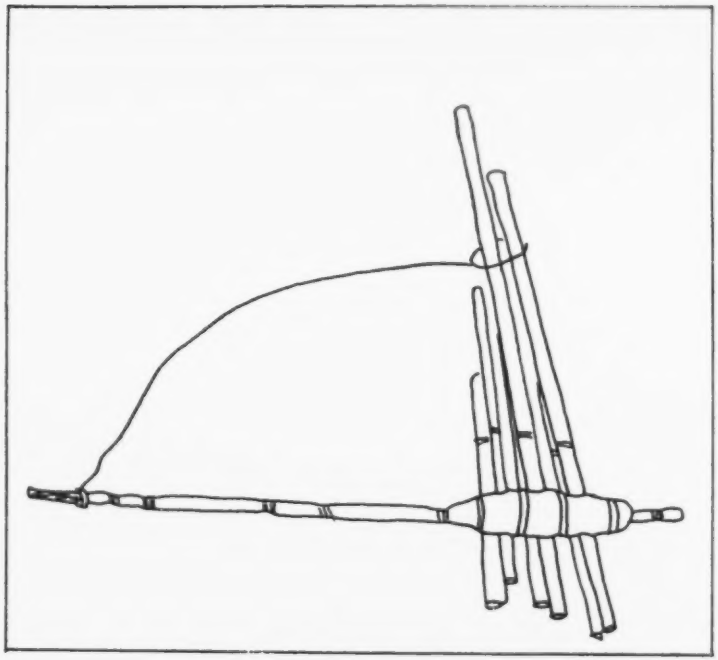
Use any ESL text you feel comfortable with and follow its sequence. Have plenty of picture cards at hand. We want the students to identify the newly acquired vocabulary with reality, not with the written word.

The examples can be used with other first language groups. You'll find that, in the majority of cases, the areas of difficulty are quite similar.

Please try to be very serious about the importance of authentic communication in your classroom. Remember, if the students don't feel the need to communicate, they won't learn.

PROMOTING COMMUNICATION: THE QUESTIONS

During the first two weeks of ESL I, I use **Total Physical Response** almost exclusively. (I continue to use it throughout the course—although not so exclusively.) The philosophy of TPR lends itself to natural language learning. Recognition and understanding must precede production. When some of the students start trying to seek even the simplest of information, then I know that they are ready to begin to communicate and I introduce the questions. The purpose of the questions is to help begin and guide the communication process. I also try to insert new grammatical constructions in a gradual way. The questions should promote real, valid



SIX-PIPE FLUTE

communication. They should not be contrived. The questions and answers are modeled by the teacher and students in the large group. Then, the students practice the answers in pairs—supervised by a teacher, an aide, or a peer tutor. Here, they find themselves talking English—communicating—in a nonthreatening way. The talking back and forth should last about 20 minutes. By that time, the students should be ready to communicate to a salient other—an aide, a visitor, another teacher—someone who has never heard their answers. I usually do about ten questions a day—every school day. I save the question sheets and use them as

a lesson plan for a substitute or visitor. The questions can also be used for periodic tests in oral idiom.

At intervals throughout the year, I invite someone who doesn't know the children to ask the questions. I find the principal, the vice-principal, and the learning director very willing to come to the class about twice a year. The students want to let someone know about them and what they've done. This is real communication.

Much later, the students will feel free to speak for two or three minutes without questions. They can also use the questions to interview one another and report to the class about "him" or "her." Here we have a legitimate change of focus—a change of subject, and thus, a change of verb inflection.

After about two weeks of questions (circa 100 responses), the ESL teacher should have a pretty good indication about each student's language. That is the time to begin working on pronunciation and those syntactic errors which impede understanding, such as basic word order.

Lesson Focus:

To develop the initial communication of information.

Lesson Objective:

The students will respond to ten questions in somewhat complete sentences. If students cannot read, use 5 questions.

Activities:

The students work in pairs. They ask and they respond. They are preparing to impart information about themselves to someone who is interested in them. Change the pairs weekly. Try to get complete sentences, if possible. The first two sets of questions are somewhat controlled communicatively. There is usually a continuum which exists between TPR and the complete sentence response. The student usually passes through stages of yes/no answers, one word answers, phrase answers and, finally, complete sentence responses.

Questions for beginners

Yes/no or single word responses

What's your name?
What's your favorite color?
Do you like to read?
Do you like to eat rice?
Who's your friend?
What's your favorite class?
Do you like to write with a pencil or a pen?
Do you come to school by bus?
Are you the oldest in the family?
Are your school colors _____ and _____?

Phrase responses

Do you live in a house or an apartment?
Do you study alone or with a friend?
Do you eat your biggest meal in the morning or in the evening?
Do you eat lunch in the cafeteria or at home?
Do you come to school alone or with a friend)?
When do you do your homework, before dinner or after dinner?
Where do you speak more English, at school or at home?
What's _____ doing?
Is _____ talking or listening?
Is _____ sleeping or listening?

Complete sentence responses

What is your name?
How old are you?
How many brothers and sisters do you have?
Where do you live?
What is your phone number?
What is your favorite food, color, song, and television program?
What is your favorite flavor of ice cream?

Are you in the seventh or eighth grade?
When did you come to the United States?
Where did you come from?

What is your mother's name?
What is your father's name?
Are you the oldest in the family?
Do you like _____ School?
Tell me about your school.
Do you have any relatives in your mother country?
Tell me about your mother country.
Describe your classroom.
Tell me about your family.
Who is the principal of your school?

Who is the vice-principal of your school?
Who is the learning director?
Do you like to read?
What kind of books do you like to read?
Did you go to school in your mother country?
Can you swim?
Can you skate?
What is your favorite soft drink?
How do you spell your last name?
Name the days of the week.

Tell me how to get to your house from school.
What color shoes do you like to wear?
Do you know how to swim?
Does your brother know how to swim?
Do you have a pet? What is its name?
Name the months of the year.
What did you do yesterday?
What are your classes?
Do you have any relatives in Laos or Thailand?
What is the Mekong?

What is your nationality?
Do you have a bike?
Does your family have a car?
What color is the outside of your house?
What is your favorite class?
Name your teachers.
Can you write in English?
Do you know how to read?
Can you ride a bike?
How many languages can you speak?

What is your grandmother's name?
Where is Vientiane?
Where is Phou Bia? What is it?
Do you eat candy?
Do you dance?
What kind of car do you like?
How many hours do you sleep?
What do you want to be when you grow up?
Where do you want to live when you grow up?
When do you go to bed?

How many hours do you study each day?
Should people smoke? Why? Why not?
How many students are there in your English class?
Spell your first and last names.
Are there windows in your classroom?
Is there a clock in your classroom?
What do people wear in your mother country?
Are there animals in your mother country?
Do you write with a pencil or a pen?
Do you wash your own clothes?

Do people play chess in your mother country?
Do people play dominoes in your mother country?
Do girls play jacks in your mother country?

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What do boys play in your mother country?
Describe your house. (one minute)
Describe someone in this classroom. (one minute)
Tell me about your brother or sister.
What do you like best about school?
When does school start?
When does school end?

What did you watch on television yesterday?
What did you eat last night?
What does the school nurse do?
Who is the school nurse?
Do you have a phone?
What is your favorite fruit?
How many pairs of shoes do you have?
How do you skate?
How do you use a sewing machine?
How do you bake a cake?

Do you put salt on your food?
Do you put sugar on your cereal?
How much sugar do you use in a day?
Do you drink milk?
How many glasses of milk do you drink every day?
Who is your favorite teacher?
What is your favorite song?
Who is your favorite singer?
Tell me about the school you went to before you came to this one.
What was the climate like in your mother country?

Do you live with your family?
What is your father's occupation?
What do you like best about the city you live in?
Did you ever cut yourself?
Are you taller than the person sitting next to you?
What is more expensive, a silver ring or a golden ring?

Describe your friend. (seven sentences)
Why do you want to learn English?
Do you have any friends who speak English?
How can your friends help you learn English?

Do you speak English with your friends?
Where do you speak English?
How many hours do you speak English every day?
What TV programs do you watch in English?
Where do you talk more English, at home or at school?
Is it hard for you to speak English? Why?
How long do you think it will take you to speak English fluently?
How many languages can you speak?
How many languages can you read and write?
Are you happy that you can speak more than one language?

How long have you been studying English?
What other languages have you studied?
What is your doctor's name?
How often do you see the doctor?
Are you afraid of the doctor?
Why do you go to school?
Do you like to go to school?
What kind of music do you like?
Why should you obey your parents?
Why should you obey the school rules?

Who is the nicest person in the class?
Who is the tallest person in the class?
Who is the smartest person in the class?
Who is older, Moua or Cha?
Who is taller, Pao or Xao?
What did you eat for breakfast?
What did we do in Science yesterday?
If you were a millionaire what would you buy?
Have you been chewing gum?
Did you study last night?

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What did you study last night?
Where did you study last night?
With whom did you study last night?
How long did you study last night?
What day was yesterday?
What day is today?
How long have you lived in this city?
Were you sick yesterday afternoon?
Can you type?
Can you speak another language?

Tell me about the trip from your mother country to the United States.
Did you leave from Bangkok?
Who came with you?
Did you come by plane?
Were there any intermediate stops?
Where did the plane land in the United States?
Who met you at the airport?
Did your sponsor meet you?
When did you come to the United States?
Did you start school the next day?

How many years have you studied in the United States?
Do you write letters?
Have you read any books this year?
Can you say the alphabet backwards?
Did you work on the farm in your mother country?
What did you do?
Did you play with a top in your mother country?
How do you play basketball?
How do you play marbles?
What is your favorite meal?

Did you ever see a fight? What happened?
Were you ever in a fight? Tell me about it.
What are your jobs at home?

What do you usually do after school?
Do you eat with chop sticks?
When is your birthday?

Who am I?

1. I used to be in the movies and television. I have black hair. My first name is Ronald. I am president of the United States. Who am I?
2. I am an animal. I live on a farm. I am large. I say, "Moo." I make the milk that you drink in the cafeteria. Who am I?
3. I am a bird. I sleep during the day. I stay awake at night. I have big eyes. People say that I'm wise. Who am I?
4. I am black and white. I love cold and icy climates. I'm a bird. I don't fly. Who am I?
5. I, too, am a bird. I don't fly either. I weigh almost 300 pounds, but I can run very fast. Who am I?
6. I live in the sea. I am very large. Like you, I have lungs. I look like a fish, but I'm not. I have to jump out of the water to breathe air. I rhyme with nail. Who am I?
7. I have four legs. I am white. I live in cold and icy climates. I have fur on the bottoms of my feet so that I can stay warm when I walk. I am white so that hunters cannot see me in the snow. I weigh about 1,000 pounds. Who am I?
8. Who are you?

The following questins are based on the phonetic difficulties found in the speech of Hmong students.

Does your mother make scrambled eggs?
Do they play the flute at funerals in your mother country?
Do you play sad music or happy music on the flute?
Are you 13 years old? Is your sister seven months old?
Does Mrs. Rivera teach eighth graders?

Did you come to the United States in 1981?
What day is the first day of the week? (Sunday)
Do you like to be alone sometimes?
Do you eat rice six times a week?
Does your family have a stove in the kitchen?

Sample Oral Test 1

What is your name and address?
What school do you go to and what grade are you in?
How many brothers and sisters do you have and what are their ages?
What is your age and where did you come from?
When did you come to the United States. Tell me the places you have lived in the United States.
Tell me about the country you came from and tell me about your trip to the United States.
What classes do you have in school? Tell me about them.
Do you want to return to your mother country? Why?
Tell me about the weather in your mother country.
What school does your sister go to?
What do you do when you have a cold?
What do you do when you are sick and cannot come to school?
What are you doing in your elective class right now?
Who is the tallest person in your class? Is he taller than you?
How do you learn English?

Sample Oral Test 2

Hi. My name is _____. I am from _____. I can speak _____ and _____. Let me tell you about my mother country _____ (2 minutes) _____. I came to the United States in 19_____. Let me tell you about my trip to the United States _____ (2 minutes) _____. Presently I am attending _____ School. Let me tell you about my school _____ (2 minutes) _____. I have _____ brothers and _____ sisters. I live at _____. Friday, February eleventh, was a free day. Let me tell you what I did on that day _____ (2 minutes) _____. It's been a pleasure talkng to you.

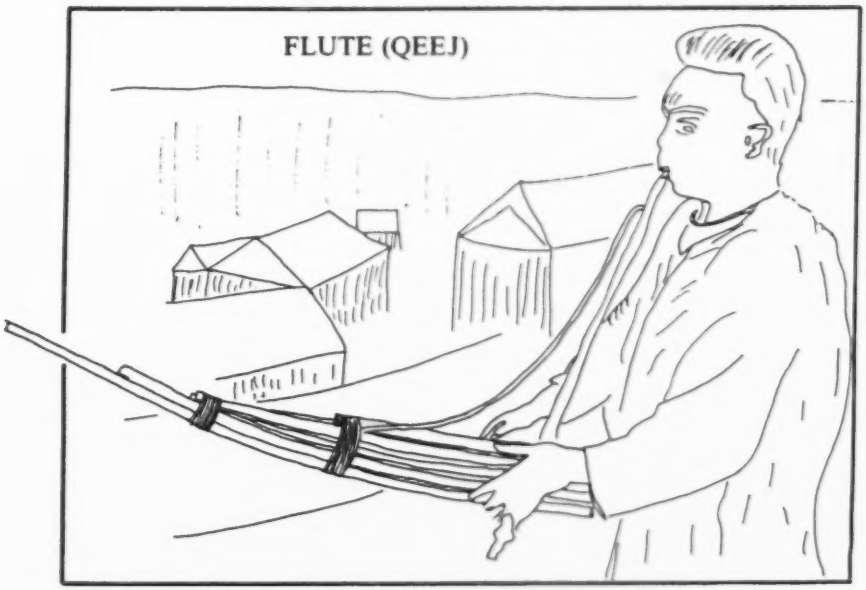
Evaluation:

The teacher or the aide will ask the student a few or all of the questions of the day.

Teacher's Comments

At the beginning it'll be like pulling teeth trying to get them to answer in complete sentences. Usually after about three or four times, the students will look forward to their list of questions.

If you desire, try to insert the new syntax items three or four days before you teach it. For example, a few days before you teach the inflections **-er** and **-est** of the comparative and superlative, ask some questions about who is bigger, the biggest, etc. When you teach the item, the student will, then, know what you are taking about.



Adapted from Garrett, 1974, p. 81.

QUESTION LESSONS SPECIFICALLY CONTEXTUALIZED FOR THE HMONG STUDENT

The following are some specifically contextualized lessons. The objective once again, is to develop communication. The lessons contain many grammatical items. The lesson on the Grain Mill, for example, includes **rice** and **corn**, non-count nouns. The lesson on the camp treats the use of **there is, there are, there was, there were,** and **both . . . and. . . .**

The picture on the left of the lesson can be used on the overhead or copied and passed out individually. The lesson should take between 20 and 30 minutes. If you wish, the students can color the picture, following your directions.

The Flute (Qeej)

Did both boys and girls play the flute in Laos?
Were there special persons who played the flute in your mother country?
Did you have a flute in your home?
When did they play the flute?
Did they play it during the New Year's celebration?
Did they play the flute at funerals?
Do you know anyone here in the city who can play the flute?
Have you ever seen a flute playing contest?
Do they play the flute at parties in the United States?

Note To Teacher:

The Hmong have a musical tradition of narratives, songs, and prayers. The six-pipe flute is generally played under special circumstances, such as: when people die; in competition at a party, like New Year. The father of the family may practice it after work.

The wooden body of the flute is made of two symmetrical halves joined together and wound with bamboo strips. The six pipes are of bamboo, the mouthpiece, of silver.

GRAIN MILL (ZEB)

The Grain Mill (zeb)

Did your mother use a mill like this to grind the corn?
Did anyone help her?
Did she grind the corn every day?

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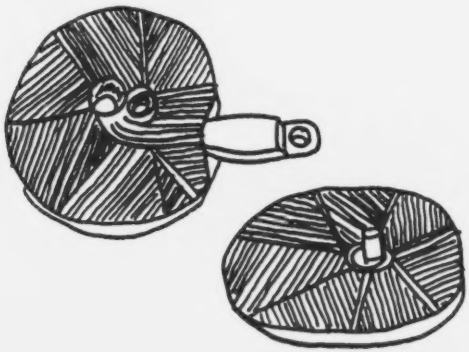
What did she use the corn meal for?
Did people grow much corn in your mother country?
Did your mother use this mill for rice too?
Did you ever grind corn?
Do you grind corn in the United States?
Do you buy your corn meal in a box at the supermarket?

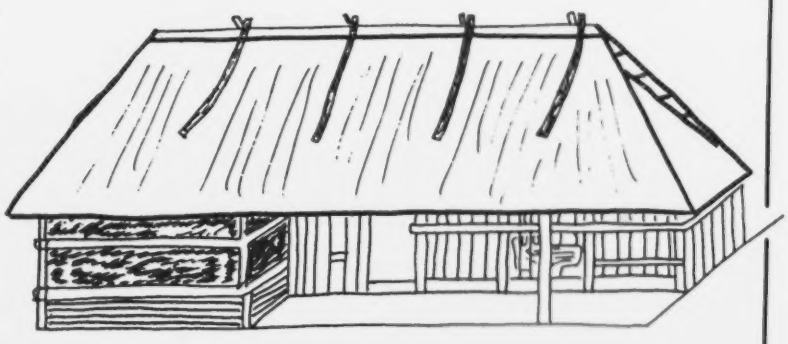
Note To Teacher:

The milling stone is made of hard, blue stone. Corn is repeatedly dropped down through the hole in the center until the corn meal is fine enough. Here is what the stone looks like inside:



The House (Tsev)

Who built your home in Laos?
Was it built on stilts or was it built on the ground?
Did you have a stove in your home?
Did you have a refrigerator?
Did you have separate bedrooms?
Was there a bathroom in your house?
Where did you eat?
Did the women eat after the men?



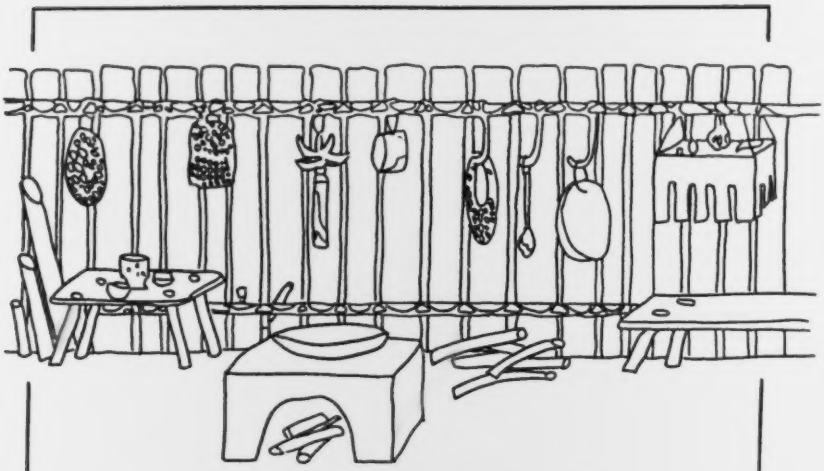
HOUSE (TSEV)

What was the roof made of?
Did you have any windows in your house?
What are some of the differences between your house in Laos and your house in the United States?

The Kitchen (chaw ua mov noj)

Who worked in the ktichen in your mother country?
Where did you keep your water?
Did you ever help your mother in the kitchen?
Where did you keep things cold?
How many meals did you eat each day?
At what time did you eat your main meal?

48



KITCHEN (CHAW UA MOV NOJ)

Did you eat rice at every meal?
How often did you eat corn?
Did you drink much milk?
Did you wash the dishes every night?

Note to the Teacher:

Along the wall in the cooking room (from left to right) is:
(above): basket, basket work bag, rolling pin, chopping block, carrying net, wooden ladle, gong, altar.
(below): bamboo water containers, stool-table, knives, cooking hearth with iron pot, firewood, bench for sitting.

The Lamp (teeb)

Did you use lamps like this in Laos?
How many lamps did you have in your home?

LAMP (TEEB)

Did the lamps hang on the walls?
Where did you get the oil for the lamps?
Who lit the lamps at night?
Did you use other types of lamps?
What do you use for light in the United States?
Do you have a lamp in your room?
Do you have enough light when you study?
Why do we need good lighting when we read and do our homework?

Note to Teacher:
Animal fat, placed in the bottom of the lamp, is used as fuel.

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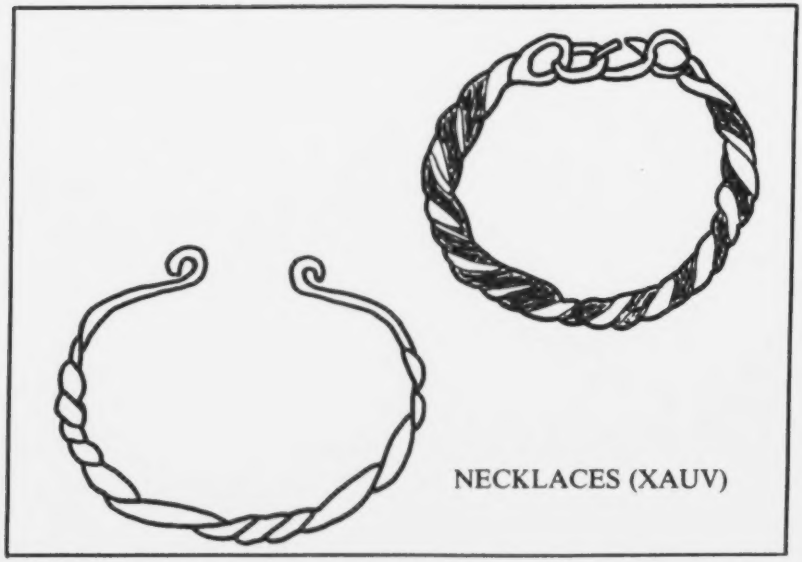
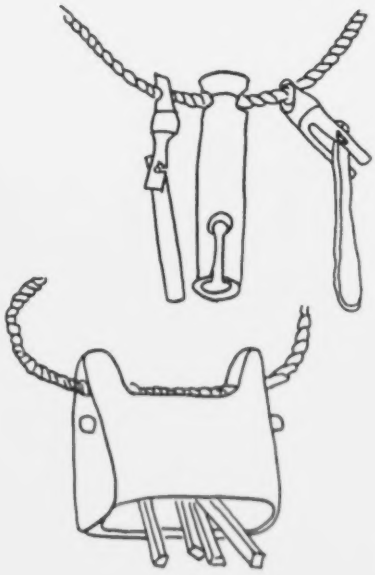


NECKLACES (XAUV)

Apparel

What kind of clothes did boys wear in your mother country?
What kind of clothes did girls wear in your mother country?
Did you buy your clothes at a store?
Where there certain days when you dressed up in your best clothes?
What did you wear on those very important days?
Could you tell the difference between a Green Hmong girl and a White Hmong girl by the kind of clothes she wore?
Who wore the necklace? (necklace = **xauv**)
Were the necklaces made of gold?
How long did it take to make the pretty clothes that you wore?
Did the boys have any special kind of clothes to wear on important occasions?



COWBELLS (TSWB)

Cowbells (tswb)

Tell me about the farm in your mother country.
What crops did you grow?
Who worked on the farm?
Did you have a job on the farm?

Who fed the chickens?
Why did the cow, the horse, and the buffalo wear bells?
What did you use these animals for?
What other animals did you have on the farm?
Did you grow enough food to eat?
Did you have any apples or oranges or any other kind of fruit?

Note to Teacher:

The cowbells pictured are made of bamboo (top) and wood (bottom).

Batik

Do boys sew in Laos?
Do girls sew in Laos?
How old are the girls when they learn to sew?
Who teaches them?
Where did you buy your needles, thread and material?
Did you have to walk far to buy these things?
How long does it take to make one of these?
Are they used for aprons?
Are they used to carry the baby?
What other uses do they have?

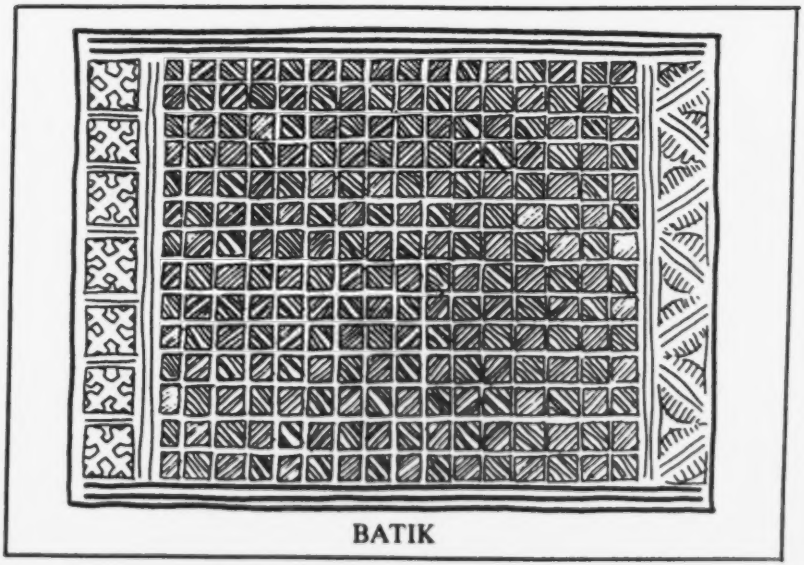
Note To Teachers;

The batik is used in different ways:
Traditional uses include being placed on the back of a man's shirt (**paj ntaub**), as an apron (**tw siv**), and as a baby carrier (**nyias**). Modern uses include as a table cloth, a wall hanging, and as a pillow cover.

STUDENT COMPOSITIONS WITH RELATED QUESTIONS

Lesson Focus:

We include here samples of theme papers of an advanced Hmong ESL student on three topics. You can use the papers as resource material for making your own questions about the three topics. If you wish, you can



BATIK

read the stories to your students and ask them the related questions, or you can copy the stories and have the students read them. Then, you can ask a series of comprehension questions on the stories. We are aware of and have not corrected the student's grammatical errors.

The Life of the Hmong in Laos

The Hmong were a small tribe, who resided in Laos since the late 19th century. Hmong lived in the mountains by themselves. They did not go for food, clothes and rice. They grew these kinds of things by themselves. Every family had its own rice field, corn field, and domestic animal; so they did not buy other family's food and animals. You would give some foods, such as vegetables, chicken, and rice to them freely if you had enough food for your family. The Hmong's life was very difficult, but they were helpful and kind to other friends.

They usually did not go to visit other people because they did not have any free time. Every morning early, they went to the rice and corn fields and came back very late at night. They visited their friends during the new year celebration, when the Hmong go from village to village.

If it was a new year, your friends and relatives would invite you to their big dinner party. All your friends and you would sit around the dinner table eating all night long. Communication between you and other people at other villages was very hard because there was no mail service. You used one man in your village to send a message to another village when you had a party or a wedding.

The Hmong New Year started in December. It took one to two weeks to celebrate. During this time, they spent their days visiting their friends. Since the Hmong only have one new year each year, communication between them was difficult and inconvenient.

The Hmong did not have hospitals or doctors during this time, but they could call a shaman, who could take care of the spirits of sick people. This shaman tried to find out why people were sick. Some Hmong believe that sick people are people who have lost their spirits. No one can see the spirit with his eyes, but the spirits are with you when you are not sick. Besides that, the Hmong used herbal medicines, which Hmong experts discovered in the jungle. They used these herbal medicines as much as we now go to see American doctors for medicines. Most Hmong sick people were helped by the shaman and herbal medicines.

The Hmong were a small tribe in Laos with an interesting tradition. They did not depend upon others because they could make their living by themselves. Besides that, they were still able to take care of sick people without hospitals. In addition, they open their mind to friends and strangers.

Questions on "Life in Laos"

Did you ever go on vacations in your mother country?
Did you travel often in your mother country?

Are there mailmen in your mother country?
Did you buy food in your mother country?
When did you visit your friends and relatives?
How many days did the New Year celebration last?
Are there hospitals in your mother country?
Are there doctors?
When people were very sick, who took care of them?
Did your parents buy medicine at a drugstore?

My Departure from Laos

On April 26, 1978, at 5:00 P.M., my family and I were leaving from Vientiane, the Capital of Laos, to go south about 47 kilometers. We got to a big jungle at 7:00 P.M., and we hid in this area for two hours. Then we started to walk toward the Mekong River at 9:00 P.M. We walked all night long that night. Nevertheless, the communist policemen still did not let any of our children and babies cry. If anyone let their children and babies cry, the policemen who guided us would kill all of us because the policemen were scared other policemen would see them. Fortunately my family did not have any children and babies at all. When it was twelve midnight, we saw an airplane in the sky circling many times, but they could not see us. After that we all slept on the ground for a moment. Moreover, the policemen who guided us knew that there were other policemen who were looking for us. They did not let any one of us use a flash light. Then, they told us to pay more money. If we did not pay more money, they would not lead us to the Mekong River because they knew it was very dangerous. At that time we knew that it was very dangerous for sure; so we decided to pay them more money. They safely led us to the Mekong River at 1:30 A.M. We were out of the most dangerous area.

At about 2:00 A.M., two canoes appeared at our side. Every one of us almost jumped into the canoe, but we were frightened that the Thai sailor turnover the canoe because the night before Thai canoe sailors had turned over three canoes because they wanted money from the refugees. We decided to get in their canoe, but we did not let them know that we had much money. When the canoe got to the middle of

the Mekong River, a heavy wind blew the canoe very hard. It almost turned over into the river. Therefore, every one of us prayed to God, and we asked God for help. We asked the sailor not to turn over the canoe because we really wanted to be alive. After we told him, he did not say anything at all. A moment after that, he told us that he wanted more money. If we did not give him more, he would turn over the canoe right away. We all told him that we really did not have any money and begged him to save our lives. He told us that he would let us think five more minutes; if we did not give him more money then he would do what he wished. After he said that, we decided to pay him more money because we really wanted to survive. We could not understand why people always want money and are killing people.

When we got to the Thai side at 2:30, there were three false Thai policemen with three guns waiting for us. We thought that they would drive us to the refugee camp. Instead, they robbed us. The three false Thai policemen told us to put our packages on the ground because they must check them. Those Thai policemen took all our money. We had no cent left. They said to us that we could go anywhere that we wished to; then they left. We all got very upset and wanted to kill them. About 4:00 A.M. there was a big yellow pick up stopping near us. Three men wearing masks on their faces came out of the car. They told us to get on. Then they drove us directly to the refugee camp. After we got to the camp, they told us that they would not return our money because they gave us so much help already. After they said that to us, we told them that we would not miss our money as much as our lives. We thought that we would survive, and we would not meet any problem like that again.

My escape from Communism this time was very dangerous and difficult because it was a long and risky way. We lost all our money to them. On the other hand, if we had not given up this amount of money, we would have been killed. Fortunately, the Laotian police airplane did not see us. Therefore, we had a chance to come to Thailand and to the United States. I now think that I will not have anything like this again in my life, fleeing from place to place. It cost

much money to flee from the Communists, and very dangerous because the guides might have killed us for money. In my opinion, I think that without money your life was worth nothing.

Questions on "Leaving Laos"

Did you leave Laos at night?
Did you walk?
How far did you have to walk?
How many people left with you?
Were there any children or babies in your group?
How did you cross the Mekong?
Did you have to pay any money?
When you arrived in Thailand, did anyone give you a ride to the refugee camp?
Were you ever afraid during your trip to Thailand?
Were you happy when you got to Thailand?

Ban Vinai Refugee Camp

Ban Vinai is the first Hmong refugee camp in Thailand, but it is very beautiful because there are four mountains around it. Refugees in this camp like to live in this camp because it looks like a small jungle. Ban Vinai is located about 650 kilometers from Bangkok.

The area of Ban Vinai is about 2000 square meters. It looks like a rectangle because the lengths and widths aren't equal. This camp is divided into eight centers, and every center is divided into four quarters. About 3500–4000 people live in one quarter. It is very inconvenient for 30,000 Hmong refugees to live there.

Hmong refugees are interested to life in this camp because it looks like a small jungle. There are small mountains in this camp, where they build their houses. Besides that, there is a small river that flows through the middle of this camp. This camp is full of trees. I was one of the Hmong living in this camp. I now hope I will never see any thing like this again.

Questions on "The Refugee Camp"

Tell me about the camp you stayed in in Thailand.
Do you remember its name?
About how many people lived there?
Was your camp big?
Did each family have its own home?
Were there schools in your camp?
Were there both Hmong and Laotians in your camp?
Did the people have enough to eat?
Did people have jobs in your camp?
How long did you stay in the camp?

My Trip to the United States

When did you come to the United States?
Did you come to the United States by jet?
When you came to the United States, where did you live?
What American schools did you go to before you came to this one?
How many months did you spend at each school?
Did you have a sponsor?
Name other cities in the United States where you have lived or visited.
When did you come to California?
Why did you come to California?
Have you ever traveled by train?
Have you ever traveled by bus?

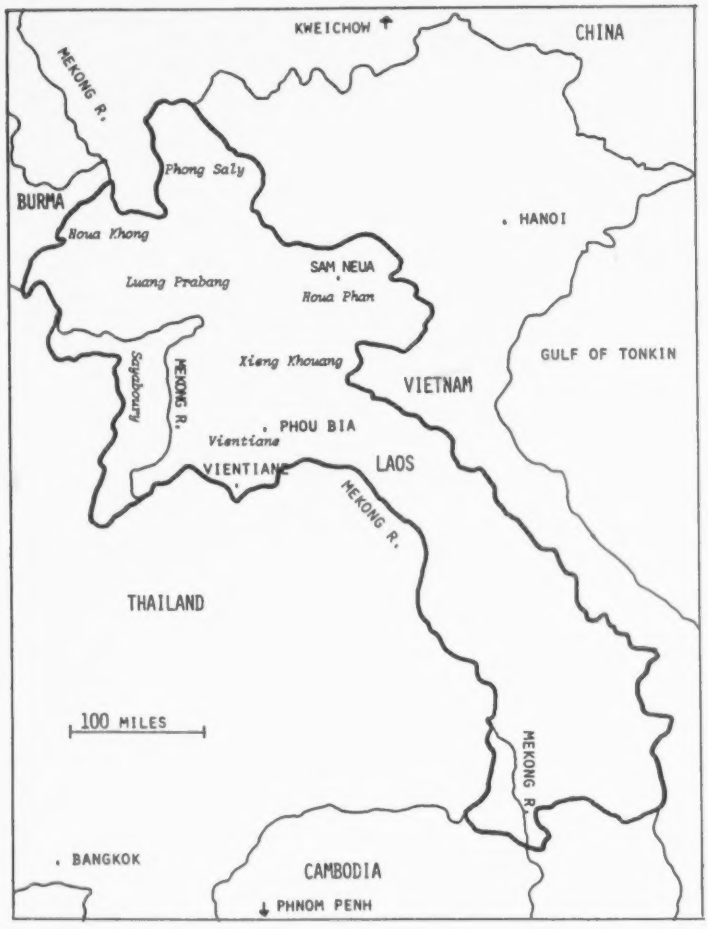
THE MAP LESSONS

Lesson Focus:

Comprehension of directions and places of origin.

Teacher's Goal:

We want the student to become acquainted with a map of Laos and to follow directions. He may not know some of the answers. He may have to take the map home and ask his relatives.


KWEICHOW
CHINA
MEKONG R.
Phong Saly
BURMA
Houa Khong
HANOI
SAM NEUA
Luang Prabang
Houa Phan
Xieng Khouang
GULF OF TONKIN
Sayaboury
MEKONG R.
VIETNAM
PHOU BIA
Vientiane
VIENTIANE
LAOS
MEKONG R.
THAILAND
100 MILES
MEKONG R.
BANGKOK
CAMBODIA
PHNOM PENH

MAP OF LAOS

60

Lesson Objective:

The student will follow directions.

Materials:

A map of Southeast Asia.

Activity:

The teacher will give the following directions:
Mark a 1 (one) on the place in Laos where you were born.
Mark a 2 on the place where your mother was born.
Mark a 3 on the place where your father was born.
Mark a 4 on the city of Vientiane.
Mark a 5 on the mountain, Phou Bia.
Draw the Mekong River and place a 6 on it.
Trace your journey from Laos to Thailand and place a 7 on it.
Put an 8 on the place where you stayed in Thailand.
Put a 9 on the place where you left Thailand for the United States.
Did the plane have any intermediate stops? Where did the plane stop?

Evaluation:

The map should be numbered in the correct places.

Teacher's Comments:

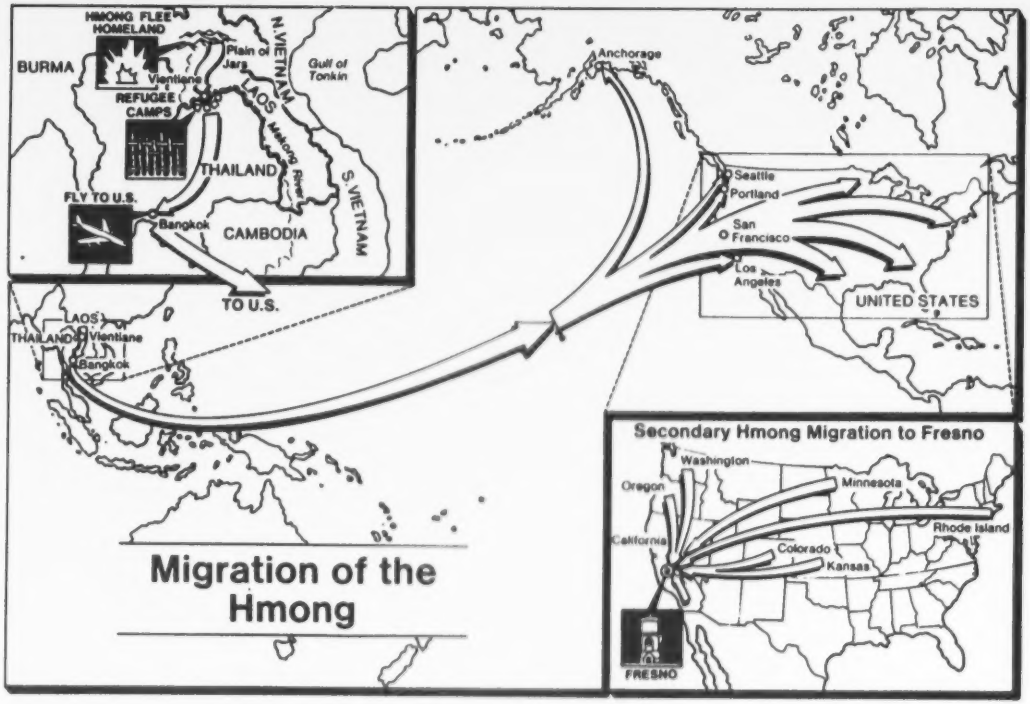
The exercise is a good cultural experience. The students can ask their parents for the information and share it with the class. Have the students work in pairs. Rarely do you have two children in your classroom from the same area of Laos, so it's good for them to see where each one came from. If you wish, let them color the map.

The following lesson is a question-answer lesson on the students' arrival and travel in the United States.

NEW SOUNDS

Lesson Focus:

Pronunciation.



Map used by permission of **The Fresno Bee**
(October 9, 1983, p. A9)

Teacher's Goal:

We want the student to recognize sounds not found in Hmong. Once recognition is realized, then we can try production. The **r**, the short vowels, and the two **th** sounds will present the real problems here. (Materials and activities are included in each lesson.)

Materials:

A basketball or any ball and a book with a nice cover resembling a Bible.

Activity:

Teacher will say:
"Stop, it's time to . . ."

PRAY

PLAY

Evaluation:

The student will point to the correct object.

Materials:

A toy car and the classroom phone.

Activity:

The teacher will say:
"There's a _____ for you."

CAR

CALL

Evaluation:

The student will point to the correct object.

Materials:

A ball and a drawing

Activity:

The teacher will ask:
"Who **drew** (or) **threw** it?"

BALL

DRAWING

Evaluation:

Student will point to the correct object.

Materials:

A lock and a rock.

Activity:

The teacher will ask:
"Where's the _____?"

ROCK

LOCK

Evaluation:

Student will point to the correct object.

Materials:

A map and a math book.

Activity:

The teacher will say:
"Point to the _____."

MAP

MATH

Evaluation:

The student will follow directions.

Materials:

A wrapped package and a price tag.

Activity:

The teacher will say:
"What's the _____?"

PRIZE

PRICE

Evaluation:

The student will point to the object mentioned.

Comments for the Teacher:

This is a total physical response exercise. Try to do about three a day. If a student doesn't recognize the sound at first, the lesson is still a success because the other members of the class are watching and listening with great attention. You can almost see in their eyes those who are beginning to distinguish the sounds. Remember recognition precedes production. This can also be a production exercise—the student takes the role of the teacher. Later, you can give some of the pairs as words on a spelling list so that the words become real "school work," not just an ESL exercise.

Other minimal pairs good for problem sounds for the Hmong are:

Mouse	Mouth	Path	Pass	Wait	What
Boy	Toy	Fourth	Ford	Rocket	Locket
Pad	Path	Letter	Leather	Pocket	Locket
Then	Ten	Lather	Ladder	Pocket	Rocket
Foot	Fought	Tan	Ten	Rubber	Rudder
Books	Box	Tin	Thin	Whale	Tail

Hook	Hawk	Mat	Math	Fail	Whale
Torn	Thorn	Doll	Ball	Sail	Whale
Rice	Rise	Bats	Baths	Wall	Whale
Fat	Fate	Fool	Full	Shine	Sign
Fall	Wall	Blush	Brush	Shine	Shin
Both	Boats	Wall	Tall	Whale	Pail
Fort	Fourth	Six	Sick	Nail	Whale

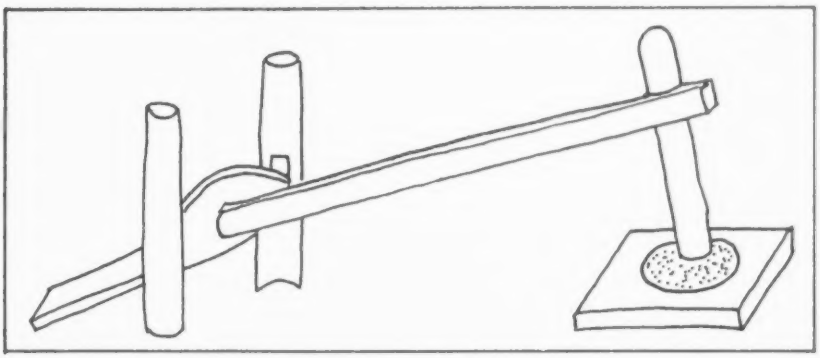
FINAL CONSONANTS: MAKE A WORD

Lesson Focus:

Pronunciation.

Teacher's Goal:

We want the students to focus their attention on the final consonants of a word. The Hmong have a difficult time with this. They tend to say the first part of the word. Once they realize they're understood, they drop the final part. The lesson can also help with voiced initial consonants and clusters not found in Hmong.



WOODEN GRAIN MORTAR

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Lesson Objective:

To direct the students attention to the final consonants of a word. The students will work in pairs and try to make words by adding consonants and clusters to a given ending. For non-readers, this can be used as a rhyming game.

Activity:

Pass out a paper with the alphabet and some initial clusters and blends which can form words with the given endings.

Example:

Make as many words as you know. Try not to guess.

a,b,c,d,e,f,g,h,i,j,k,l,m,n,o,p,q,r,s,t,u,v,w,x,y,z,qu,bl,cr,sl,sm,sn,st, sh,gl,dr,fl,ch,sp,sk,sl,br,fr,cl,fl,tw,pr,ph.

-at

-ad

-ag

-amp

-ank

-ack

-ig

-ace

-ide

-one

-op

-ool

-y

-ick

Evaluation:

Have the students read aloud the words they have found.

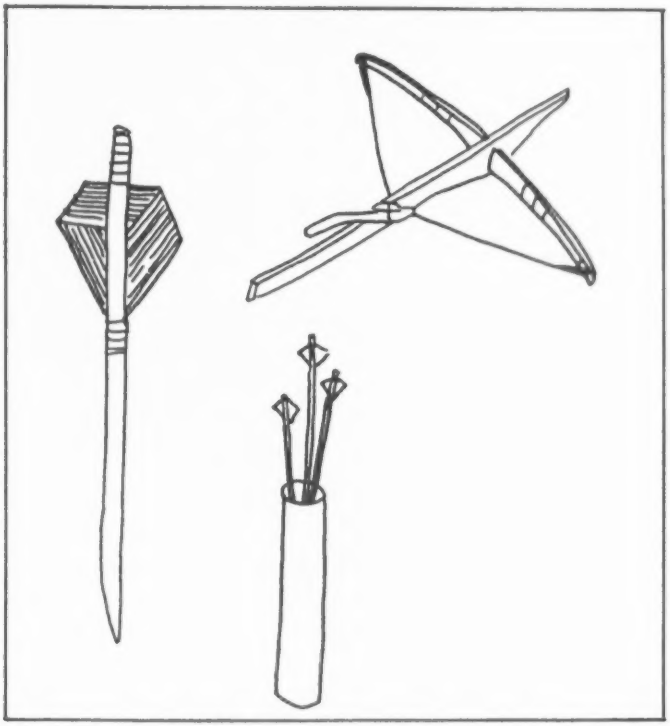
Teacher's Comments:

I do about three endings a day until the students begin to say the final consonants more clearly. In pairs, the students will focus their attention on

both final and initial clusters. In the process of discovering a word, the students will say the clusters many times.

INFLECTIONAL SUFFIXES OF VERBS

Allow the students to use the verbal inflections for awhile. In fact, in answering the questions they are continuously using verbal suffixes. When they use them correctly, reinforce it. They will make many mistakes in their



CROSSBOW AND ARROWS

use of the correct endings. When the teacher perceives that the students are beginning to realize that there are changes and they're not quite sure how to make them, it's time to give them information on how to monitor their language. Spend time teaching the meaning of the different temporal adverbials first.

Lesson Focus:

Verb inflections.

Teacher's Goal:

We are attempting to further internalize the rule of verb inflections in English. We have to be extremely patient during this lesson because even in first language acquisition, this is perfected quite late. This lesson can be used in conjunction with or as a reinforcement of the **See it, Say it** material.

Lesson Objective:

To have the students relate the correct verbial endings with the corresponding temporal adverbial.

Materials:

Make a verb card. See illustration.

On different colored cards print various temporal adverbials: **yesterday, last night, right now, often, every morning, twice a week.**

Activity:

Write on the board:

Yes, I _____.

Yes, he _____.

Yes, he is _____.

Yes, she _____.

Regular verb with inflectional suffixes:

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Focus on affirmative statements. One student manipulates the adverbials while another manipulates the verb card. The teacher asks the following questions. The students answer, using the manipulatives.

Do you play every day?

Answer: Yes, I **play** **everyday**.

Does John play baseball twice a week?

Answer: Yes, he **plays** **twice a week**.

Is Bill playing now?

Answer: Yes, he is **playing** **now**.

Did Mary play yesterday?

Answer: Yes, she **played** **yesterday**.

Evaluation:

The students can identify the verbal endings with the corresponding adverb.

Teacher's Comments:

Use a new regular verb every other day. Stay with affirmative answers for a while. For further evaluation, ask other questions using the same verb. The adverbials should be changed often, otherwise the students will tend to slavishly identify the various tenses with one or two adverbs.

Try, also, to associate the different tenses with situations. Draw some stick-men and put the names of the days of the week on top. Ask the following questions:

Did Bill play **Monday**?
Did he play **Tuesday**?
Did he play **yesterday**?
Is he playing **today**?
Does Bill play **everday**?

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The following is a list of other adverbials.

often	hourly
seldom	last week
every day	last year
frequently	last night
always	last month
sometimes	long ago
suddenly	once upon a time
now	in the spring
generally	in the winter
immediately	in the morning
finally	on July 9th
daily	around noon
monthly	once in a while
weekly	once
yearly	at last
nightly	yesterday

USE OF THE **DUMMY DO**

Lesson Focus:

Sentence transformation using **do** and its forms.

Teacher's Goal:

This concept, too, is one of the most troublesome for the language learner. What the lesson attempts to do is further the internalizing process of the use of **do**, **does** and **did**, and their negatives. Patience is definitely the required virtue here.

Lesson Objective:

To show the students the most common uses of the English **do** for questions and negations.

Materials:

Insert cards—on separate 3 × 5 index cards print: **Do, Does, Did, Is, Are.**

For subsequent lessons on the same topic, sometime later, print the negatives on separate cards: **Don't, Doesn't, Didn't, Isn't, Aren't.**

Use verb cards from the previous lesson.

Use the adverbial cards from the previous lesson: **Yesterday, right now, every day.**

Activity:

Pass out the insert cards and the adveribals. A student will volunteer to manipulate the verb card. Treat the questions first, the negatives are more difficult. These should be treated in subsequent lessons.

On the board, the teacher writes **you** and a question mark.

Teacher: Mai, ask me if I play every single day.

Teacher: Class, what cards do we need to make Mai's question?

The students who have the **Do** and the **every day** come up and place their respective cards in the appropriate places.

Teacher: Do we need any endings on the verb?

The sentence is now formed.

Do you **play** **every day** ?

The teacher will then ask for questions from the students changing the subject and the adverb. E.g. **Teacher:** Mai, ask me if John played yesterday. Write on the board, **He** and a question mark.

The **Did** and the **Yesterday** come forward.

Did he **play** **yesterday** ?

Evaluation:

See the evaluation at the end of the section on negatives.

Teacher's Comment:

Unless you want total confusion in your classroom, don't even attempt this and the following lesson until after at least five months of ESL. By that time, the students will have been using the forms in their questions and answers almost spontaneously. The lesson can be confusing if you try to do too much at one time. Do only one or two forms a day, but use the lesson every day.

NEGATION

Lesson Focus:

The focus of this lesson is on negative answers.

Teacher's Goal:

I use the manipulatives of the previous lessons to show the students how a negative response is made in English.

Activity:

The teacher writes on the board:

No, I _____.

No, he _____.

No, he _____.

No, she _____.

Focus attention on the negative responses. A student manipulates the adverbials, another the insert card, and a third the verb card. The teacher asks the following questions. The students, using the manipulatives, answer:

Question: Do you play every day?

Answer: No, I **don't** **play** **every day** .

Question: Does John play basketball twice a week?

Answer: No, he **doesn't** **play** .

Question: Is Bill playing now?

Answer: No, he **isn't play ing now** .

Question: Did Mary play yesterday?

Answer: No, she **didn't play yesterday** .

Evaluation:

Here are some examples you can use to reinforce the use of the inflections, the **dummy do** and negative formation:

Verb: Play (ing), (s), (ed)

Question:	_____ you _____	**right now**	?
Answer:	Yes, I am (No, I am not) _____	**right now**	.
Question:	_____ you _____	**every day**	?
Answer:	Yes, I (No, I) _____	**every day**	.
Question:	_____ he _____	**every day**	?
Answer:	Yes, he (No, he) _____	**every day**	.
Question:	_____ she _____	**every day**	?
Answer:	Yes, (No,) _____	**every day**	.
Question:	_____ they _____	**yesterday**	?
Answer:	Yes, (No,) _____	**yesterday**	.
Question:	_____ he _____	**right now**	?
Answer:	Yes, (No,) _____	**right now**	.

Teacher's Comments:

It's a lot harder to explain what I do than to do it. Use just one example a day and the students will begin to see how a sentence is transformed.

ADJECTIVE PLACEMENT

Lesson Focus:

Syntax of position of adjectives.

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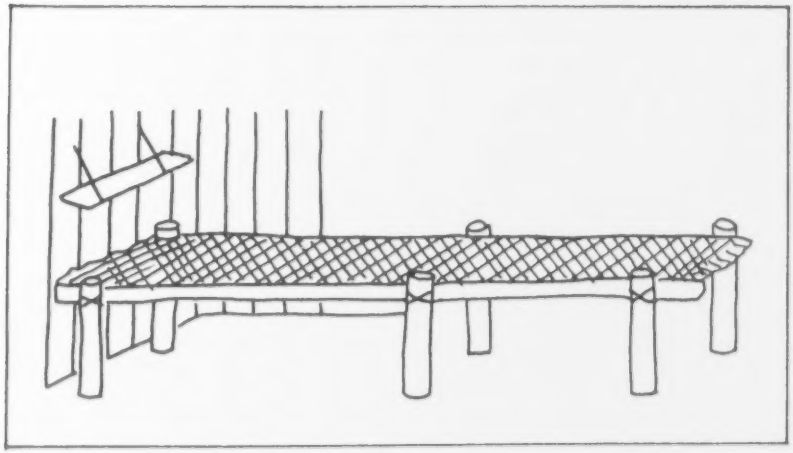


BED

Teacher's Goal:

The correct placement of adjectives is a problem for the Hmong speaker. The exercise is a simple way of showing the placement of adjectives.

Lesson Objective:

The students will describe the cow using two adjectives in their correct position.

Activities:

Draw a cow on the board. Have a list of descriptive adjectives. (Good, short, contented, etc.) The teacher says: "I see a ____, ____ cow."

Evaluation:

To evaluate, simply ask each student: What do you see?

INDIRECT STATEMENTS

Lesson Focus:

Syntax of indirect statements.

Teacher's Goal:

We are trying to show the student how a direct quotation can be changed to an indirect one. You will notice in the transcriptions of the Hmong students that this is a difficulty for them.

Lesson Objective:

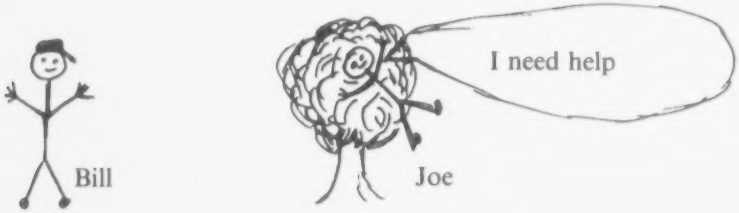
The students will change a direct quotation to an indirect statement.

Materials:

3 × 5 index card with the word **that** which is used as an insert card.

Activity:

Draw the following pictures on the board.



Joe says, "I need help."

Joe says **that** he needs help.

Joe tells Bill **that** he needs help.

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Mary says, "_____."
Mary says **that** _____.
Mary tells Ann _____.

9:00 a.m.
Tom says, "_____."
Tom says **that** _____.
Tom tells Bill _____.

9:00 P.M.
Tom said, "_____."
Tom said **that** _____.
Tom told Bill _____.

Teacher's Comments:

The insert card is very important for this lesson. Once the **that** is inserted, the student can see the need for a change in subject and inflection. You can pass out other statements for the students to read, e.g., "I need a pencil." "I am sick." "John is chewing gum." "I have to go." You can ask another student what the **exact words** are that the person is saying. He or she should give you the direct quotation. The question, "What is he saying?" can be the cue for the indirect statement. Begin using the **that**. Later on, the students will see that the sentences can be said with or without it.

PASSIVE

Lesson Focus:

Syntax with focus on the passive.

Teacher's Goals:

To have the students begin to change the focus from agent to recipient.

Lesson Objective:

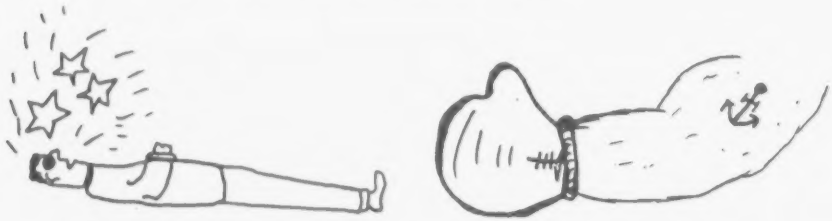
The students will begin to have an understanding of the passive voice in English.

Materials:

Drawings on the board and headlines from the sport pages.

Activity:

The teacher will ask questions about the recipient.

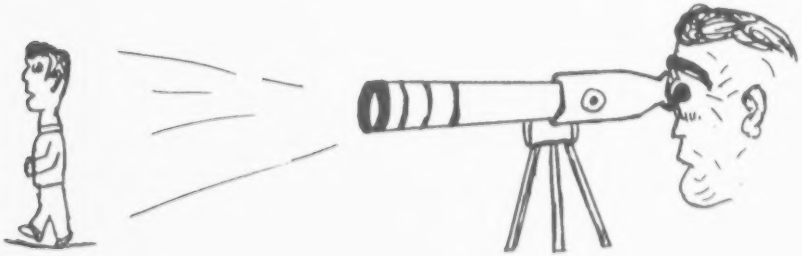


Thao

80

Question: What happened to Thao? **He was knocked out.**

Other answers: He was hit. He was hurt. (Try to stay away from **got**.)



Xao

Question: What's happening to Xao?

Answer: Xao is being watched.

Bring in the sports page and read some headines.

CARDINALS ARE DEFEATED BY THE DODGERS.

JETS ARE DEFEATED BY THE REDSKINS.

TEHIPITE VOLLEYBALL TEAM IS DEFEATED BY KINGS CANYON.

THE 7th GRADE IS DEFEATED BY THE 8th GRADE.

Evaluation:

If the students really understand the passive, they will be able to answer this simple question. **Who won?**

Teacher's Comments:

The whole purpose of this exercise is to get the students to change their focus. The first noun in the sentence can at times be acted upon.

SENTENCE EXPANSION

Lesson Focus:

Syntax of sentence expansion in English.

Teacher's Goal:

Often, the students speak and write in short, choppy, two or three word sentences. During the advanced stages of ESL I and II, this exercise is used to expand the sentences. If you wish, you can use all the students in the class. Just add more phrases. This is also a good exercise to break the fear of reading long sentences.

You want the students to focus their attention on an important use of **that** in English.

Lesson Objective:

The students will focus their attention on the use of **that** in sentence expansion.

Materials:

Cards or strips of paper with parts of the sentence on them. Three large cards with **that** printed on them. A card with a period on it.

Activity:

The cards are passed out and the teacher begins to call the words and phrases.

1. "I"
   The person with the **I** comes forward and faces the class.
2. "I eat." The **eat** and the **.** come forward.
   "What do we have now?" A student answers: "I eat, period."
   The students with the cards read their respective card.
3. The process is repeated with each new added phrase.

Evaluation:

For comprehension, the teacher will ask questions. What do you eat? When do you eat rice? What does your sister say? What does your mother think? Have the students count the number of **that** 's.

Teacher's Comments:

This can be a fun lesson. You can have the students hide their cards, and you can ask other students to recall the sentence. Don't expect the students to make sentences like this, but they'll begin to see the use of **that**. (Later, you might have the students with **that** cards hide their cards to show how the sentence can be said without the inserts.)

The exercises which we have seen are meant to highlight the rules. They are an attempt at a simple explanation of a complex reality. Simply because the students can do the exercises does not necessarily imply that they have mastered the rule. Time is an important factor in second language acquisition. It may take months—even years—before certain specific rules are internalized. The teacher, then, should relax, be patient and optimistic, and enjoy the adventure.

ANNOTATED BIBLIOGRAPHY

Armbruster, S. The Hmong: A Struggle in the Sun (in four parts). **The Fresno Bee**, October 9, 10, 11, 12, 1983.

This series of articles (with excellent photographs) offers a very good perspective on the present experiences of the Hmong in the United States.

Bernatzik, H. A. **Akha and Miao: Problems of Applied Ethnography in Farther India.** New Haven: Human Relations Area Files, 1970.

Buchanan, K. **The Southeast Asian World.** New York: Doubleday, 1967.
An easy-to-read book with brief introductory readings on the history and status (in 1967) of all the countries of Southeast Asia. It has good maps and offers a good general perspective of the milieu from which the Hmong come. The bibliography is extensive, although it is now out of date and contains only one entry specifically on Laos.

Center for Applied Linguistics, **English-Hmong Phrasebook with Useful Wordlist** (for Hmong speakers), adapted and translated by Cheu Thao, CAL, Washington, D.C., 1981.

A very useful and extensive word and phrase list, organized around topic areas such as money, time, people, places, health, food, clothing, housing, jobs, and schools.

Center for Applied Linguistics, English Language Resource Center, Indochinese Refugee Education Guides, General Information Series No. 15, *The Hmong Language: Sentences, Phrases and Words,* undated.

While this paper does give very useful information on Hmong sentence structure at the beginning, its title is misleading. The second part details many invaluable insights into Hmong life and culture, and their linguistic expression. Even if one is not directly interested in the liguistic facts, teachers of Hmong children would understand their students much better with information such as: Hmong groups in the United States, Hmong clans, given names for boys and girls, kinship terms, numbers, units of measurement, time-telling, the seasons, days of the week, months of the year, and many others. The annotated bibliography is informative.

Center for Applied Linguistics, English Language Resource Center, Indochinese Refugee Education Guides, General Information Series No. 14, *The Hmong Language: Sounds and Alphabets,* reprinted in February, 1981.

A good extensive description of the sound and spelling system of Hmong. Attention is given to describing Hmong education and literacy in Laos, and the development of an alphabet (RPA) for the Hmong language used outside of Laos. The paper contains a useful annotated bibliography on the Hmong people and another on the Hmong language.

Garrett, W.E. No Place to Run: The Hmong of Laos, *National Geographic,* 1974, *45*(1), 81.

Murdock, G. P., *et al.* Human Relations Area Files, New Haven, 1961.

A valuable source of information on the history and culture of the Hmong in spite of the fact that its bibliography is outdated (ranging from 1911 to 1954). The file that includes information on the Hmong is *AE 5-Miao*. There are 12 sources on which the Miao file is based, most of which relate to the Hmong of Southern China. Actually, the best information on the Hmong of Laos is found in the *AO 1-Thailand* file (source No. 39: Bernatzik) and in the *AM 1-Indochina* file (source No. 69: Lewis). Of these two, the Bernatzik work is extremely informative and credible. It is our impression that the Lewis piece is somewhat anecdotal and subjective.

The organization of the HRAF could be of use to the teacher interested in developing cultural materials for classroom work with Hmong children. All the bibliographic sources for each file is searched, and information is teased out by category. Thus, one can read the original sources, or simply look up whatever all the sources say about, for example, geography, history, language, food, textiles and fabrics, clothing, structures, living standards, recreation, fine arts, entertainment, family, kinship, community, numbers and measures, infancy and childhood, etc. There are 716 categories, grouped into 79 major topical divisions.

Olney, D. P., *A Bibliography of the Hmong (MIAO) of Southeast Asia and the Hmong Refugees in the United States,* (2nd ed.). Southeast Asian Refugee Studies, Occasional Papers, Number One, Southeast Asian Refugee Studies Project, Center for Urban and Regional Affairs, University of Minnesota, Minneapolis, 1983.

This is a very complete and up to date bibliography on the Hmong. It includes sections on Southeast Asia, Hmong ethnography, linguistic studies, resettlement issues, physical and mental health, journalism, Hmong language, and films and video tapes about the Hmong.

Perazic, E. Little Laos, Next Door to Red China. *National Geographic,* 1960, *117*(1), 46-70.

While this older article makes only brief mention of the Hmong, it contains useful information and pictures of Laos.

Purnell, H. (Ed.). Miao and Yao Linguistic Studies (Chang Yu-hung and Chu Kwo-ray, trans.), Linguistics Series VII, Data Paper No. 88. Ithaca, New York: Cornell University, Southeast Asia Program, 1972.

These articles, written by Chinese scholars, give a detailed linguistic description of Hmong dialects spoken in China. The articles are somewhat technical, and the dialects described are different from those spoken in Laos.

Roberts, T. D., *et al. Area Handbook for Laos.* Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1967.

This government publication has an informative chapter with information on the Laotian Hmong, entitled: "Ethnic Groups and Languages," pages 49-62.

Shaplen, R. A Reporter at Large: Survivors, *The New Yorker,* September 5, 1977, pp. 33-66.

This article is packed with information about the plight of the Hmong, Laotian, Cambodian, and Vietnamese refugees in Thai refugee camps. It gives the reader a good, specific idea of why and how the Hmong fled Laos and of what their living conditions in Thailand were like. The author's interviews also reveal the Hmong's concern for what the future would bring. For example, the author's interpreter said, "I'm afraid if the Meo are dispersed all over the world, like gypsies, we won't survive."

White, P. T. and Garrett, W. E. The Mekong: River of Terror and Hope. *National Geographic,* 1968, *134*(6), 737-789.

The Mekong originates in the Himalayas and flows south through China and Southeast Asia. This article illustrates its importance in providing food, water, and power to Laos and surrounding countries. There are a couple of pages on the Hmong, and the pictures are very good.

_____, and _____. Report on Laos. *National Geographic, 1961, 120*(2), 241-275.

Besides information on the country of Laos and the Laotians, this paper has some information on the Hmong and also a very good map of Laos.

_____, Solheim, W. G., and Garrett, W. E. The Lands and Peoples of Southeast Asia. *National Geographic,* 1971, *139*(3), 296-365.

This series of three articles ("Mosaic of Cultures," "New Light on a Forgotten Past," and "Pagan on the Road to Mandalay") is a good introduction to details about all the countries of Southeast Asia (Burma, Thailand, Cambodia, Laos, and Vietnam), and the influence of India and China on these countries. There is one page of discussion devoted to the Hmong and other Laotian minorities.

Worthley, W. *Sourcebook of Language Learning Activities: Instructional Strategies and Methods.* New York: Little, Brown and Co., 1978.

We have purposely not included bibliographic references on ESL. We are, however, including this book as a source that we have used and would recommend to other teachers. This is one of many good special education resources and is a good example of special education language learning ideas that ESL teachers would do well to begin to use.

APPENDIX 1

A NOTE ON THE DESCRIPTION OF SOUNDS

The consonants of a language are traditionally described in terms of three characteristics: voicing (vibration of the vocal folds in the larynx), point of articulation, manner of articulation.

To get the idea of what **voicing** is, cover your ears with your hands, then pronounce the sounds [f] and [v]. You should hear a loud vibration in your head with the [v] but just a little hissing sound from the [f].

Let us illustrate the convenience of using **point of articulation** as a way to describe sounds. The sound [p] is formed by bringing together both lips; it is a "bilabial" sound. The [f] is made by **barely** touching the lower lip to the upper-front teeth. It is, therefore, a "labio-dental" sound. Other consonants are formed by touching a part of the tongue to the top of the mouth at some point, e.g., the [t] is an "alveolar" sound, or the [k] is a velar sound.

The sounds mentioned so far [p f t k] are all **voiceless** sounds because the **vocal folds** are open and not vibrating. The sounds [b v d g] all have the same respective points of articulation. They are distinct from the first set of sounds in that the vocal folds are vibrating when they are pronounced. The sounds [b v d g] are **voiced**.

English consonants are also described in terms of these **manners of articulation**.

stops	(total momentary closure of articulators)
fricatives	(close approximation or slight touching of articulators)
affricates	(combination of a **stop** + **fricative** together)
nasals	(air passes through the nasal cavity)
liquids	(vowel-like sounds [l] and [r])
glides	(sounds that glide from one point to another)

We can, therefore, describe a consonant sound in terms of the three characteristics of voicing, point of articulation, and manner of articulation, in that order:

[p] = a voiceless bilabial stop
[v] = a voiced labiodental fricative
[g] = a voiced velar stop

The consonants can be represented on a chart that lists points of articulation across the top (from the front of the mouth to the back), and manner of articulation along the left side:

	bilabial	labio-dental	inter-dental	alveolar	palatal	velar	glottal
stops	p b			t d		k g	ʔ
fricatives		f v	θ ð	s z	š ž		h
affricates					č ǰ		
nasals	m			n		ŋ	
liquids				l r			
glides	w				y		

Some unfamiliar symbols (Don't be intimidated by them!) on the consonant chart are:

[θ] = the sound in **th**ick
[ð] = **th**ey
[š] = **sh**irt
[ž] = pleasure
[č] = **ch**urch
[ǰ] = the sound in **j**udge

The vowels, on the other hand, are traditionally described in terms of the relative position of the tongue in the mouth. Vertically, the tongue can be **high** (in the mouth), **mid**, and **low**. Horizontally, the tongue can be **front**, **central**, and **back**. The vowel chart of English, then, looks like this:

	front	central	back
high	i b**ea**t		u b**oo**t
	I b**i**t		U p**u**t
mid	e b**ai**t	ə s**ó**f**a**	o b**oa**t
	ɛ b**e**t	ʌ b**u**t	ɔ c**au**ght
low			
	æ b**a**t	a f**a**ther	

The vowels on the periphery of the chart, [i e o u], are **tense** vowels because they require more muscle tension on the part of the tongue. These vowels tend to be "diphthongized" in English, almost pronounced like [iy ey ow uw].

Diphthongs are combinations of vowels, usually a mid or low level vowel followed by a high vowel, like [ai] and [au] in the words **hi** and **how**. When the [-i] and [-u] are joined to another vowel to form a diphthong like these, it is sometimes represented by a [-y] and [-w] respectively, as in [ay] and [aw].

The **back** vowels are all **rounded** in English. That is, the [u U o ɔ] are pronounced with the lips rounded. The lips are more or less 'flat' during the articulation of the rest of the vowels.

APPENDIX 2

COMMONLY OCCURRING WORDS: ENGLISH-HMONG

Brief Notes on the Pronunciation of Hmong:

For a more detailed discussion of Hmong pronunciation see Chapter 2.

SOUND-LETTER CORRESPONDENCES

SPELLING	HMONG SOUND	SIMILAR TO ENGLISH SOUND IN
ph	p^h	**p**it
p	p	sp**o**t
th	t^h	**t**ip
t	t	s**t**op
d	d	**d**ay
ch	ty^h	not **y**et
c	ty	not **y**ou
kh	k^h	**c**at
k	k	s**k**it
qh	q^h	(even farther back than **k**)
q	q	(even farther back than **k**)
txh	ts^h	What **'s**a matter?
tx	ts	that**'s**
tsh	$č^h$	**ch**op
ts	č	ca**tch**
h	h	**h**it
f	f	**f**ine
v	v	**v**ery
x	s	**s**ee
zh	z	**z**oo
xy	sy	Race **y**a!
s	s	**sh**oe
m	m	**m**et

hm	m (voiceless*)	"Hmong"
n	n	**n**et
hn	n (voiceless)	**sn**eak
ny	n	**on**ion
hny	ny (voiceless)	
r	t, tr	**tr**ip
l	l	**l**end
hl	l (voiceless)	**sl**eep
y	y	**y**et
i	i	b**ee**t
e	e	b**ai**t
ee	**e or eŋ	r**ai**n
a	a	f**a**ther
o		b**ough**t
oo	**o or oŋ	b**o**ne
u	u	b**oo**t
w	ɨ	(make a **u** sound without rounded lips)

* Voiceless **m** is like a quick, heavy breath through the nose with lips closed.
** = a nasalized sound

Hmong words are usually single syllables of the structure: consonant + vowel. Virtually all Hmong words, therefore, end in a vowel. The consonant letter found at the end of a Hmong word is "silent." The letter signals which tone to use for that word. Ask one of your Hmong students to help you practice the Hmong tones:

FINAL LETTER	TONE CONTOUR	EXAMPLE
-b	high level	plab (stomach)
-j	high falling	phauj (aunt)
-v	mid rising	siv (belt)
(no letter)	mid	ci (toast)
-s	long low	tes (hand)
-g	breathy low	neeg (man)
-m	short low	niam (mother)
-d	glottalized low-mid-low	tawd (strong)

COMMONLY OCCURING WORDS*

afternoon (**n.**)/yav hnub qaij
airplane (**n.**)/dav hlau
ankle (**n.**)/pob ko taw
apple (**n.**)/txiv apple (n/a)
arm (**n.**)/caj npab
ashtray (**n.**)/tais rau quav luam yeeb
aunt (**n.**)/phauj
baby (**n.**)/me nyuam me
baby chicks (**n.**)/me nyuam qaib
back (**n.**)/nraub quam
bad grades (**n.**)/gib phem
ball (**n.**)/npas
banana (**n.**)/txiv tsawb
bank (**n.**)/tsev pauv nyiaj
barn (**n.**)/tsev tev
basement (**n.**)/qab tsev
basket (**n.**)/pob tawb
bat (**n.**)/tus pas
bathing suit (**n.**)/ris tsho da dej
bathroom (**n.**)/chav tsev da dej
bathtub (**n.**)/dab da dej
beach (**n.**)/ntug dej hiav txwv
bear (**n.**)/dais
bed (**n.**)/txaj
bedroom (**n.**)/chav tsev pw
bedspread (**n.**)/ntaub pua chaw
bee (**n.**)/muv, ntab
beef (**n.**)/nqaij nyuj
belt (**n.**)/siv
bicycle (**n.**)/nees zab
big (**adj.**)/loj
bird (**n.**)/noog
black (**adj.**)/dub
blanket (**n.**)/pam
block (for building)(**n.**)/
lub ntoo plaub fab
blouse (**n.**)/tsho poj niam
blow (**v.**)/tshuab
blue (**adj.**)/xiav
boat (**n.**)/nkoj
book (**n.**)/phau ntawv
books (**n.**)/phau ntawv
boot (**n.**)/
khau tawv qhwv plab hlaub
bottle (**n.**)/lam fwj
bow (**v.**)/khoov, hneev nti
bowl (**n.**)/tais, phiab
box (**n.**)/lub thawv ntawv
boy (**n.**)/me nyuam tub
bracelet (**n.**)/hlua tes
bread (**n.**)/khob cij
broom (**n.**)/khaub ruab
brother (**n.**)/kwv tij
brush (**v.**)/txhuam
bug (**n.**)/kab
buggy (**n.**)/tsheb, lob

* We acknowledge and thank the seven Hmong speakers who contributed to this vocabulary list. For most words, they were in agreement with respect to word choice, pronunciation, tone, and spelling. For many words, however, these speakers used different Hmong terms. Expect, therefore, to find some dialect differences among your Hmong students.

In the vocabulary list that follows, we have marked those terms in bold that have no Hmong equivalents: for these, words have now been borrowed from English into Hmong.

burn (**v.**)/hlawv
bus (**n.**)/npav
butter (**n.**)/**butter**
cabinets (**n.**)/tub rau khoom
cake (**n.**)/khob noom qab zib
call (**v.**)/hu
camera (**n.**)/koob thaij duab
candle (**n.**)/roj ntses, tswmciab
candy (**n.**)/npawm npoo qab zib
cane (**n.**)/pas nris
cap (**n.**)/kaus mom cau pliaj
car (**n.**)/tsheb lau luv fai
carrots (**n.**)/zaub lauj pwm
cart(**n.**)/tsheb, thseb thawb
cat (**n.**)/miv
catch (**v.**)/txhom
chair (**n.**)/rooj zaum
cheese (**n.**)/**cheese**
chest (**n.**)/hauv siab
chicken (**n.**)/qaib
chin (**n.**)/paub tsais
chop (**v.**)/tsuav, ntov
church (**n.**)/tsev teev ntuj
cigarette (**n.**)/luam yeeb
circle (**n.**)/kheej, vaj voog
circus (**n.**)/yees siv
class (**n.**)/pawg
classroom (**n.**)/
chav tsev kawm ntawv
climb (**v.**)/nce
clock (**n.**)/teev loj
close (**v.**)/kaw
closet (**n.**)/
qhov chav rau khaub ncaws
coat (**n.**)/tsho tiv no loj
coffee (**n.**)/kas fes
coin (**n.**)/nyiaj npib
cold (**adj.**)/no
comb (**n.**)/lub zuag
cook (**n.**)/ua mov noj
cook (**v.**)/ua mov noj
cookie (**n.**)/khob noom
corn (**n.**)/pob kws
cough (**v.**)/hnoos
cow (**n.**)/nyuj
crack (**v.**)/tawg
cracker (**n.**)/**cracker**
crawl (**v.**)/nkag
cross (**n.**)/hla
cry (**v.**)/quaj
cup (**n.**)/khob
curve (**n.**)/nkhaus
cut (**v.**)/txiav
daughter (**n.**)/tus ntxhais
day (**n.**)/hnub
deer (**n.**)/muas lwj
desk (**n.**)/rooj sau ntawv
dig (**v.**)/khawb
dining room (**n.**)/chav tsev noj mov
dishcloth (**n.**)/
ntaub ntxuav tais diav
doctor (**n.**)/tus kws kho mob
dog (**n.**)/aub, dev
doll (**n.**)/me nyuam roj hmab
door (**n.**)/qhov rooj
dress (**n.**)/daim tiab
dresser (**n.**)/tub rau ris tsho
drink (**v.**)/haus dej
drive (**v.**)/tsav
drop (**v.**)/poob

drum (**n.**)/nruas
duck (**n.**)/os
ear (**n.**)/pob ntseg
eat (**v.**)/noj
eggs (**n.**)/qe
eight/yim
eighty/yim caum
elbow (**n.**)/luj tshib
elephant (**n.**)/ntxhw
eleven/kaum ib
evening (**n.**)/yav tsaus ntuj
eye (**n.**)/qhov muag
face (**n.**)/ntsej muag
fall (**v.**)/poob
family (**n.**)/tsev neeg
farm (**n.**)/liaj teb
farmer (**n.**)/neeg ua liaj ua teb
fast (**adj.**)/ceev, nrawm
father (**n.**)/txiv
feather (**n.**)/plhaub
feel (**v.**)/zoo li
feet (**n.**)/ko ntaw
few (**adj.**)/tsawg, me
fifty/tsib caug
fight (**v.**)/sib ntaus
finger (**n.**)/ntiv tes
fingernail (**n.**)/rau tes
fireman (**n.**)/neeg tua hluav taws
fish (**n.**)/ ntses
five/tsib
floor (**n.**)/tag tsev
flower (**n.**)/paj ntoos
fly (**v.**)/ya
foot (**n.**)/ ibtxhais taw
forest (**n.**)/hav zoov
fork (**n.**)/rawg
forty/plaub caug
four/plaub
friend (**n.**)/phooj ywg
frog (**n.**)/qav
frown (**v.**)/hnya
fruit (**n.**)/txiv ntoo
gate (**n.**)/rooj vag
giraffe (**n.**)/nees txaij cajdab ntev
girl (**n.**)/me nyuam pojniam
give (**v.**)/muab rau
glass (**n.**)/khob iav
glasses (**n.**)/cov khob
gloves (**n.**)/hnab tes
good grades (**n.**)/khab nee zoo
grade level (**n.**)/qib
grapes (**n.**)/txiv nkhawb
grass (**n.**)/nroj
green (**adj.**)/ntsuab
ground (**n.**)/av
gum (**n.**)/xis nkoos
hair (**n.**)/plaub hau
hamburger (**n.**)/**hamburger**
hammer (**n.**)/rab rauj
hand (**n.**)/tes
hat (**n.**)/kaus mom
haystack (**n.**)/zaub nyuj
head (**n.**)/taub hau
heavy (**adj.**)/hnyav
hide (**v.**)/muab zais
hip (**n.**)/pob tw
holiday (**n.**)/hnub so, hnub caiv
hop (**v.**)/dhia
horn (**n.**)/ke luv fai
horse (**n.**)/nees

hospital (**n.**)/tsev kho mob
hot (**adj.**)/kub
hot dog (**n.**)/**hot dog**
house (**n.**)/tsev
ice cream (**n.**)/kas lees
jacket (**n.**)/tsho tiv no
janitor (**n.**)/tus tu vaj tse
jar (**n.**)/lub hub
jump (**v.**)/dhia
key (**n.**)/yaum sij
kick (**v.**)/ncaws
kitchen (**n.**)/Chav tsev ua mov
kite (**n.**)/vauj
knee (**n.**)/huav caug
knife (**n.**)/riam
knock (**v.**)/khob
ladder (**n.**)/tus ntaiv
lamp (**n.**)/teeb taws
laugh (**v.**)/luag
laundry room (**n.**)/chav tsev ntxhua khaub ncaws
leaf (**n.**)/nplooj ntoos
leg (**n.**)/ncej puab
lettuce (**n.**)/**lettuce**
librarian (**n.**)/tus neeg cia ntawv
life (**v.**)/nqa sawv
lift (**v.**)/nqa sawv
light (**n.**)/teeb, duab tshav
lion (**n.**)/tsov ntxhuav
listen (**v.**)/mloog
little (**adj.**)/me me
living room (**n.**)/chav tsev nyob
log (**n.**)/cav ntoo
look (**v.**)/ntsia
man (**n.**)/txiv neej
many (**adj.**)/ntau
matches (**n.**)/ntais ntawv
meat (**n.**)/nqaij
mechanic (**n.**)/tus kws kho tsheb
milk (**n.**)/mis nyuj
mirror (**n.**)/tsom iav
mittens (**n.**)/hnab looj tes
money (**n.**)/nyiaj
monkey (**n.**)/liab
month (**n.**)/hli
moon (**n.**)/hli
morning (**n.**)/sawv ntxov
mother (**n.**)/niam
mountains (**n.**)/roob
mouse (**n.**)/nas tsuag
mouth (**n.**)/qhov ncauj
nail (**n.**)/ntsia thawv
napkin (**n.**)/ntawv so tes
neck (**n.**)/caj dab
nest (**n.**)/zes noog
newspaper (**n.**)/ntawv xov xwm
night (**n.**)/hmo ntuj
nine/cuaj
ninety/cuaj caum
nose (**n.**)/caj ntswm
nut (**n.**)/txiv qab rog
ocean (**n.**)/hiav txwv
one/ib
one hundred/ib puas
open (**v.**)/qhib
orange (**n.**)/txiv kab ntxwv
orange juice (**n.**)/kua txiv kab ntxwv
owl (**n.**)/plas
paint (**n.**)/pleev kob (thaxim)

pajamas (**n.**)/khaub ncaws hnav pw
pan (**n.**)/lub yias
pants (**n.**)/ris
paper (**n.**)/daim ntawv
pay (**v.**)/them
peas (**n.**)/taum hmog
pen (**n.**)/cwj mem
pencil (**n.**)/mem qhuav
pepper (**n.**)/fwj txob
persons (**n.**)/neeg
phone (**n.**)/xov tooj
pick up (**v.**)/khaws
picture (**n.**)/duab
pie (**n.**)/**pie**
pig (**n.**)/npua
pillow (**n.**)/hauv ncoo
plate (**n.**)/phaj
play (**v.**)/ua si
playroom (**n.**)/chav tsev uasi
plumber (**n.**)/
neeg kho kav dej kav lau
point (**v.**)/taw tes
policeman (**n.**)/tub ceev xwm
pork (**n.**)/nqaij npua
potatoes (**n.**)/qos yaj ywm
pour (**v.**)/hliv
principal (**n.**)/xib fwb loj
pull (**v.**)/rub
purse (**n.**)/hnab tawv poj niam
push (**v.**)/thawb
put on (**v.**)/muab cia, hnav
rabbit (**n.**)/luav
radio (**n.**)/xov tooj cua
rain (**n.**)/nag
read (**v.**)/twn ntawv
recess (**n.**)/so ib pliag
red (**adj.**)/liab
refrigerator (**n.**)/
tshuab txias cia zaub mov
rice (**n.**)/txhuv
ride (**v.**)/caij
ring (**n.**)/nplhaib
river (**n.**)/ib tue dej
road (**n.**)/kev
robe (**n.**)/tiab ntev
rock (**v.**)/pob zeb
rooster (**n.**)/lau qaib
rug (**n.**)/ntaub so ko taw
run (**v.**)/khiav
salt (**n.**)/ntsev
sandwich (**n.**)/**sandwich**
saw (**v.**)/kaw
scarecrow (**n.**)/moj zeej
school (**n.**)/tsev kawm ntawv
scissors (**n.**)/txiab
secretary (**n.**)/
tus ntaus ntawv los sau ntawv
seven/xya
seventy/xya caum
sheep (**n.**)/yaj
ship (**n.**)/nkoj
shirt (**n.**)/tsho
shoe (**n.**)/khau
short (**adj.**)/luv
shoulder (**n.**)/xub pwg
sing (**v.**)/hu nkauj
sink (**n.**)/dab ntxuav muag
sister (**n.**)/muam
sit (**v.**)/zaum
six/rau

sixty/rau caum
skate (**n.**)/khiav skate
skip (**v.**)/dhia ceg pauv
skirt (**n.**)/tiab
skis (**n.**)/khiav skis
sled (**n.**)/tsheb dev luag
sleep (**v.**)/pw
slide (**v.**)/ua zawv zawg
slip (**v.**)/nplua
slippers (**n.**)/khau khiab
slow (**adj.**)/maj mam
smile (**v.**)/luag nyav
snake (**n.**)/nab
sneeze (**v.**)/txham
snow (**n.**)/te, daus
snowman (**n.**)/neeg te (uas puab)
soap (**n.**)/xum npum
sock (**n.**)/thom khwm
soda pop (**n.**)/dej gab sib
sofa (**n.**)/rooj zaum
son (**n.**)/tus tub
soup (**n.**)/kua zaub
spoon (**n.**)/diav
square (**adj.**)/ua plaub fab
squirrel (**n.**)/nas ncuav
stand up (**v.**)/sawv ntsug
stars (**n.**)/hnub qub
stomach (**n.**)/plab
stool (**n.**)/rooj peb ceg
stop (**v.**)/nres
store (**n.**)/tsev muag khoom
stove (**n.**)/qhov cub
street (**n.**)/kev
street light (**n.**)/teeb kev
student (**n.**)/tub kawm ntawv
suit (**n.**)/ib ce ris tsho
sun (**n.**)/hnub
sunset (**n.**)/hnub poob
swim (**v.**)/ua luam dej
swing (**n.**)/viav vias
swing (**v.**)/ua viav vias
table (**n.**)/rooj
talk (**v.**)/hais lus
tall (**adj.**)/siab
teacher (**n.**)/xib fwb
teacher's aide (**n.**)/tus pab xib fwb
teddy bear (**n.**)/dais ua si
teeth (**n.**)/hniav
television (**n.**)/**t.v.**
ten/kaum
test (**n.**)/xeem
thirty/peb caug
three/peb
throat (**n.**)/caj pas
throw (**v.**)/txawb
thumb (**n.**)/ntiv tes xoo
tie (**v.**)/ntaubkhi caj dab
tiger (**n.**)/tsov
toast (**n.**)/ci
today (**adj.**)/hnub no
toe (**n.**)/ntiv taw
tomato (**n.**)/txiv lws suav
tomorrow (**adj.**)/tag kis
tongue (**n.**)/nplaig
toothbrush (**n.**)/txhuam hniav
toothpaste (**n.**)/tshuaj txhuam hniav
towel (**n.**)/txoj phuam
tractor (**n.**)/tsheb laij teb

train (**n.**)/tsheb ciav hlau
trees (**n.**)/ntoo
triangle (**n.**)/ua peb ceg
tricycle (**n.**)/nees zab peb lub log
truck (**n.**)/tsheb thauj khoom
turn (**v.**)/tig
turn on (**v.**)/qhib
turtle (**n.**)/vaub kib
tutor (**n.**)/tus pab qhia
twenty/nees nkaum
twenty-one/nees nkaum ib
two/ob
uncle (brother's son) (**n.**)/
txiv ntxawm
uncle (sister's son) (**n.**)/dab lang
underwear (**n.**)/ris luv
wagon (**n.**)/tsheb cab
walk (**v.**)/mus kev
wall (**n.**)/phab ntsa
wallet (**n.**)/hnab tawv nyiaj
wash (**v.**)/ntxhua
washcloth (**n.**)/phuam
watch (**n.**)/lub moos
wave (**v.**)/co co tes
week (**n.**)/lim tiam
wheel (**n.**)/log tsheb
white (**adj.**)/dawb
window (**n.**)/qhov rais
woman (**n.**)/poj niam
work (**v.**)/ua huaj lwm
wrist (**n.**)/caj dab tes
write (**v.**)/sau
year (**n.**)/xyoo
yellow (**adj.**)/daj
yesterday (**adj.**)/nag hmo